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THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF EXPERIENCE
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IN many contemporary philosophical writings, what is most surprising to me is not the things asserted, nor those denied, but those not even mentioned (or barely mentioned as of no importance). Several of these slighted topics are summed up in the title of this essay. At the age of twenty, when I was not reading any technical philosophers, nor any author (unless a poet or two) who held an essentially social view of experience, I attempted to persuade myself of the adequacy of a non-social view, expressed partly in a self-interest theory of motivation, and partly in an idea of perception as experience of things not themselves constituted by any sort of experiences. So far from succeeding in this attempt, I began to find reasons for regarding both motivation and perception as manifestations of a single principle, that of the overlapping or inter-individual unity of minds, not simply of human minds, but of mind on various levels of nature, including inorganic nature. This overlapping I thought I found in experience itself, and not merely through speculation or postulation. Subsequent reading in philosophy has not shown me a basic error in this early philosophizing, but only a vagueness and blurring of distinctions which, when taken into account, strengthen rather than weaken the case.

It seems plain that many of my colleagues have not gone through any such reflections as the above, and have only the faintest idea that anyone else has. It is chiefly for their benefit—if that is the word —that this article is written. It will appear in due time that while the position I present is not fashionable, it is not merely eccentric either, but represents a substantial tradition, though one whose clearest expositors are mostly fairly recent, albeit currently somewhat neglected. These predecessors—for me almost all subsequent discoveries—appear to have reached their convictions by something like the reflection upon direct experience, the phenomenologizing, referred to above. It is such reflection upon concrete experience

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which I suspect is missing in those who do not "see the point" of such views. Current writers are often admirably concrete about linguistic behaviour, but not always sufficiently so concerning the experiential data utilized in such behaviour.

The first specific theme I wish to discuss is the concept of "matter" or "physical thing". Only three positions seem currently taken into account: pure scepticism, phenomenalism (matter as logical construction from our sense perceptions), realism (matter as something more than such construction).[1] Of these views, the first and third seem unimpressive: the first, since no one, not even Russell, so much as pretends to believe it; the third, because a mere "more than datum of our experience", of which nothing further can be said (beyond the bare geometrical structures defined by physical equations [and no further account is offered]) seems empty. Its assertion could only serve notice that phenomenalism will not do, and we must look for an alternative. It is not itself such an alternative. Since phenomenalism, as many writers now agree, is paradoxical, and since its only apparent realistic alternative is empty, philosophy is caught in a "pathological" oscillation of just the kind in which John Wisdom delights. But perhaps the dilemma springs from an unwarranted though fashionable restriction upon the possible doctrines. For the history of philosophy presents at least one deliberate, oft-renewed, and positive alternative to phenomenalism. It has been proposed and progressively improved by Leibniz, W. K. Clifford, C. A. Strong, C. S. Peirce, James Ward, the later Bergson, W. Stern, Varisco, Whitehead, Sewall Wright, and numerous other philosophers and scientists.[2] Apparently, they have written in vain. For modern philosophy has now been reduced to Hume, Moore, Russell, Wittgenstein, and the disciples and emendors of the last three.

If someone defines your body, say, as a certain logical construction from his, or other observers', sense perceptions, you may well ask, "But what about *my* sense perceptions? Do they not belong to, or with, my body, in a sense in which no one else's do or can?" Surely that is undeniable. But if the body is a frog's, the frog cannot make such an antiphenomenalistic protest; still, ought we not to make it on behalf of the frog? It too presumably has sensations; and so, in wondering what is the real frog, we are not necessarily asking, "What more than sensation is there to the frog?" We may instead be wondering what humanly imaginable or unimaginable sensations

[1] See, e.g., John Wisdom, *Philosophy and Psycho-analysis* (1953), pp. 42–5, 79 f., 85, 97, 133 f., 140 f., 144, 204–6, 233 ff., 236–43.

[2] For an interesting contemporary instance, see L. Vax, "Introduction à la Métaphysique de Raymond Ruyer", *Rev. de Métaph. et de Morale*, 58e Année (1953), pp. 188–202. Also Ruyer, *Néo-Finalisme* (Paris, 1952), especially Chs. XIV–XV. Views such as Ruyer's are not discussed in England under the heading "metaphysics". Indeed, at the moment, they are not discussed at all.

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are frog sensations. And similarly we may wonder about the sensations of an insect, with organs but little like ours, or the feelings of an amoeba with no organs at all, in the same sense. Nor need this be the lower limit. Professor Wisdom likes to mention the query, "Do flowers feel?" But representatives of the tradition I am trying to present put the question somewhat differently: e.g. do plant cells, or whatever vegetable creatures there may be which are comparable in unity to a vertebrate animal, feel? Many-celled organisms without nervous systems seem to most naturalists less unified than either a cell, on the one hand , or a vertebrate organism, on the other. In Whitehead's picturesque phrase, "a tree is a democracy".

Here then is an issue: one may stop at one's own sensations or perceptions, and treat the rest of the world as logical construction only (solipsism); one may stop at human perceptions, and treat all other animals, with the rest of nature, as logical construction only (humanistic phenomenalism); one may stop at the vertebrate animal or the single cell or perhaps the virus unit and regard all below this level as mere conceptual construction, presumably from our human perceptions (animalistic or vitalistic phenomenalism); one may not stop anywhere, but may take all physical process to involve, or even (for at this point the distinction becomes empty) to consist of, feeling, sensations, or other sorts or aspects of experience—experience as not merely human, not merely animal or vitalistic, but as forming a still vaster array of diverse levels (sub-atomic, atomic, etc.) of which animal experiences are but the higher or more complex of those known to us. This last-mentioned doctrine ("panpsychism", to use a not very satisfactory term) is a definite proposal, made in all seriousness by a large number of competent minds during the past three centuries, as to *what* "more" there is to physical reality than human perceptions and logical construction therefrom.

Doubtless it will be said that, since words express contrasts, to identify reality and experience is merely to substitute one word for another. I reply first, that this objection cannot, at any rate, be made by phenomenalists. For the panpsychic view admits every positive contrast which phenomenalism affirms, plus the contrast between human, animal, or vital experience with experience on still lower levels. Second, the common-sense everyday contrast between "sentient and insentient" is valid in its own sphere for any philosophy. Truly "common" sense is concerned with what is effectively distinguishable without science or special instruments; moreover, since common sense does not know that there are molecules, but only that there are stones, and does not know that there are plant cells, but only that there are visible plants, and since panpsychists usually admit that stones and plants do not feel (although molecules and plant cells, or other sufficiently integral constituents of stones

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and plants, they hold, do feel), what issue can there be here with common sense or the "stock uses" of words? I am confident that the tradition I am expounding is not guilty of any fatal neglect of the principle that meaning depends upon contrast.[1] It merely sets aside incurably verbal contrasts for those that can be made more than verbal, or pseudo-absolute contrasts (resulting from man's great need to simplify) for those whose degree or kind of relativity has been recognized.

The panpsychic proposal means that the two problems, matter and other mind, which haunt contemporary British authors, are really but the one problem, other mind, this problem, however, being vastly broader and more complex (though also, as we shall see, in some respects more manageable) than current debate suggests. "Other minds", as commonly used in philosophy, means other human minds, with a casual sideglance at the minds of other animals. But who knows where to put a lower limit to comparative psychology, except provisionally and as a mere matter of methodological convenience? Many scientists question if such a limit can ever have any further meaning.[2] And so do many philosophers. The point is not merely that we do not know exactly where, ultimately, to draw the line, but that an equally good (bad) case can be made for drawing it almost anywhere—at the limits of humanity, the vertebrates, the amoebae, viruses, genes, molecules. The issue is essentially philosophical, being scientific only in a methodological sense. For it is a question of categories: can "matter" mean anything less or more than the lower levels of "other mind", where individuality is trivial, and therefore easily masked by statistical effects? Or, again, how different from the human mind can a thing be and still be "mind", characterized by "feeling" and the like; and is this possible difference necessarily less, or in a different direction, than that between human beings and atoms, or even particles if these are thought to be concrete? There seems to be nothing in current British philosophical literature that helps at all directly to deal with such questions. Yet how else if not by facing them can we escape the paradox of phenomenalism?

As Isaiah Berlin has well reminded us (Royce had said it long ago), phenomenalism is a modal confusion, in that it must translate, or mistranslate, affirmations of actual existence or occurrence into hypothetical statements concerning human sensations which would

[1] Collingwood's denial of truth to metaphysics (*Essay on Metaphysics*, pp. 13-14) rests on the notion that metaphysical generality means collapse of contrast. This is an error. No one says, e.g., that "*everything* feels"; for of course numbers do not, nor do mere loosely-unified aggregates.

[2] E.g. R. Gerard, in *The Scientific Monthly*, LXIV (1947), pp. 500 ff.; S. Wright, *The American Naturalist*, LXXXVII (1953), pp. 12—17. Also some of the closing paragraphs of his article on "Evolution, Organic", in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1949).

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or might occur.[1] But need there be paradox in the definition of actual physical reality in terms of actual experience, if no limitation is placed on possible difference from the human sort of experience? The paradox cannot lie in the necessity that every experience have "an object" other than itself; for other experiences, of various kinds, are "other" enough—so much so that "other mind", even other human mind, is an epistemological puzzle on its own account, though one we cannot simply get rid of on any theory.

Is the paradox in the fact that matter is "extended", while (it is thought) experiences are not? This contention of Descartes (in large part adopted by Broad[2] and, for some of the right reasons, attacked by Ryle) seems rather scandalous at the present stage of knowledge. On the one hand, the sense in which physical reality is extended is not simple, as physics shows ever more clearly; on the other hand, various philosophers have shown, ever more explicitly, that and how experiences are extended, or how extension is conceivable as the real (not merely, as in Leibniz, ideal) interrelationships of experiences on various levels.[3]

It is quite true that human experiences are not extended in the same way as a table, but neither is light, nor an atom or electron. Each level or mode of reality, or experience, is extended only in its own fashion, appropriate to that level. Human feelings are given with decidedly spatial character. Spatiality, since it is given, is *in* experience if anything is, and must characterize it somehow. That the spatiality of human experience is not the kind characterizing a table (such for example that one can bump into it) is irrelevant; for one is not saying that human experiences or feelings constitute tables. And we do not exactly bump into light, or heat waves. Besides, in the region of a human body one bumps into the body at the skin, and the human perceptions, thoughts, or feelings are inaccessible to contact, being (roughly) in the nervous system. For things are spatially together with their most immediate causal conditions and consequences; and a reasonable theory of psycho-neural interaction is subtler than the arguments brought against it.

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[1] "Empirical Propositions and Hypothetical Statements." *Mind*, 59 (1950), pp. 289–312.

[2] C. D. Broad, *The Mind and Its Place in Nature* (1925), pp. 204, 630 f. Broad assumes that all "mentalism" or psychicalism must agree with Berkeley and Leibniz as to the "delusiveness" of spatial experience. This assumption is inapplicable to some recent forms of psychicalism.

[3] See, e.g., Peirce, *Collected Papers* (1931–35), pars. 6.133, 264–5, 277; Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, pp. 241–4, 259–60; *Process and Reality*, pp. 95–126. In the first passage cited, especially on p. 243, Whitehead shows, I think, how all that is cogent in Ryle's account of mind could and would be contained in a well-thought-out panpsychic system. See also DeWitt H. Parker, *Experience and Substance* (1941), Chs. V, VI, XIV.

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Our inability (so far as we are unable) to imagine modes of experience as different from ours as atoms are different from human beings is only—an inability; it is not a positive insight into the meaningfulness of "mere, insentient matter". Moreover, can we imagine distinctly, on any other terms, what an atom is? Even the physicists now deny this; but if they did not, we should have to deny it for them, since physics abstracts from quality, save as mere clue to structure. Yet quality must be there. Human experiments with atoms, we know. But if my experiments with you tend to leave at least a little something of your quality hidden, then when I deal with things so remote from myself as atoms (or stones, if you prefer), what is hidden, though in itself trivial perhaps, may yet be proportionally greater, relative to the accessible aspects of the stone. In everyday life we have no interest in such relatively hidden aspects of things. Indeed, how much does the farmer care how cattle feel, or whether there is feeling in plant cells? (But Albert Schweitzer cares, the Jains care.) Still less does a carpenter care about the feeling of molecules composing wood. Nor does the physicist concern himself with it. What follows? That the question is meaningless? Doubtless a healthy self-centeredness or limitation of interest, personal or occupational, is a practical virtue (to which language is presumably well conformed); but it is hardly an absolute theoretical virtue, authorized to determine the scope of possible meanings! No one doubts that vertebrate animals feel. But behaviour studies tend more and more to focus, not on imagined feelings, but on observed or inferred bodily displacements. Yet I submit that when we are seeking the meaning of the most general conceptions, no question of degree of importance, or of exact determinability in detail, can enter. Be they important or unimportant, feelings do occur, and the conceivable extent of their occurrence is a fair question. Science is not at present concerned with this question, but the problem of matter logically leads straight to it. For until we know what can be meant by "nonhuman experience"—what scope of possible differences, including different modes of spatialization, are involved—we have not begun seriously to consider the question, are physical things reducible to experience as such or not?

To substitute for this genuine issue of the possible transhuman scope of "experience" the merely verbal one of whether, besides experience (scope unspecified), there must not also be something more, some "matter", about which nothing positive can be said (apart from the bare geometrical patterns of physics), is to take the life out of an issue which twenty centuries of reflection have gradually shown to have a certain vital import, leaving it a poor, dead, withered thing. We are profoundly social beings, and it matters to us what sort of society, including, in the background, what sort of world-

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society, we belong to. Only persons rather remote (as most of us, alas, are) from nature and the less conscious but more primitive and concrete aspects of their own experiences could forget this.

We cannot consider here all the reasons which have seemed to panpsychists to commend their doctrines.[1] Instead we must pass on to face the issue of Other Mind, or social knowledge, which, if panpsychism is correct, contains all that is genuine in the problem of matter.

As Professor Wisdom wittily puts it, both A and B can know A's feelings, but not altogether in the same way: for, as both A and B can scratch A's head, yet only A can scratch A's head as his own; so only A can feel A's feelings, while B must know them by observing A's behaviour.[2] Nevertheless, Wisdom suggests, it is needlessly paradoxical to say that the feelings simply *are* the behaviour. Nor are A's feelings in A's body as an invisible something is in a visible object; for the feelings are, as it were, "visible" to A in that he feels them, and they are visible to B in the only appropriate sense, i.e. through behaviour.

This simplicistic account, as I must take it to be, rests once more on controversial though fashionable assumptions, or inhibitions of attention. The impossibility that B should observe A's feelings as directly as A does is apparently taken as self-evident, absolute, and valid for all values of A and B (human, sub-human, and super-human?). There are, of course, philosophies, including, in fact, most great speculative systems, which have held views contradictory to this supposed axiom. For one thing, nearly all theistic philosophies have held that deity directly perceives (or, if you prefer, knows) all feelings; and no one ever supposed that when God beholds our anger He is angry in the same sense, nor yet that He merely observes our behaviour. Moreover, there is ambiguity in the alleged truism that B cannot feel A's feelings as A feels them. If the meaning is that there must always be some difference in the connotation of "feel" in the two cases, it is undeniable. If, however, the meaning is that

[1] See, e.g., Whitehead, *Nature and Life* (republished as Part III of *Modes of Thought*—1938); also *Adventures of Ideas* (1932), Ch. XI. Collingwood complains that Whitehead has not told us "what are the real facts in nature which oblige us to make" the abstraction "matter". (See *The Idea of Nature* —published posthumously in 1945—last chapter.) This is as surprising as much else in Collingwood's account of Whitehead, who of course has specified in some detail what the facts in question are, e.g., the monotonous regularity, due to slight creative originality, on low levels of experience; the limited objectives of physics, the structure of the human body, etc. Collingwood may have been misled by the use, in *Nature and Life* only, of "life" in the broadest possible sense, seeming to blur the careful distinction made elsewhere between "living" and "nonliving" systems or "societies". That there is no contradiction a glance at Whitehead's *Principles of Natural Knowledge*, paragraph 64.6, should show. [2] See *Other Minds*, especially pp. 205 ff.

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the difference must consist in this, that whereas *A* directly feels *A*'s feeling, *B* can only observe *A*'s behaviour, then all self-evidence vanishes. After all, I cannot visually observe the tip of my tongue "precisely as another can", but I can visually observe it nonetheless. So from, "I cannot directly feel *A*'s feeling as *A* does" one may not deduce, "I cannot directly feel *A*'s feeling". There may be more than one way of directly feeling a feeling. And so much many philosophers have held (Bergson, Fechner, and Peirce, for example). The absolute mutual privacy of feelings *qua* feelings, their absolute "simple location" in the experience of some one subject, their purely external relatedness to other subjects, is an immense speculative commitment.

The logical structure of the significant question is not, Can one feel another's feeling as the other does, but Can one feel another's feeling in *some equally direct, yet otherwise different,* manner? For instance, can *A* feel *B*'s very anger, and yet not be irate himself? (I warn the reader again that I am not discussing solely human "feelers".) The question is somewhat analogous to these: Can one imagine fear and yet not be afraid? or (coming closer), Can one remember unhappiness and yet not be unhappy—at least, in the same sense?

There are two possibilities: either an immediate feeling has, or it has not, what we may call a social structure; i.e. either it is simply a feeling *of* this very feeling itself (or "of" nothing) or else it is, at least sometimes, "feeling of (another's) feeling" (Whitehead)—thus *A*'s enjoyment of *B*'s enjoyment; or perhaps, *A*'s enjoyment of *B*'s suffering. This last enjoyment would, no doubt, be tinged with suffering; but the point is that, although some difference must distinguish the first from the second referent of "feel", it need only be a difference sufficient to prevent *A* and *B* from collapsing into one subject.

It may, of course, be said that if *A* feels *B*'s very feeling, then "by definition" it is his own, *A*'s feeling, *and that alone*, which he feels. However, the social view of feeling holds the contrary, and rejects any such definition of selfhood or of feeling. It takes the given "otherness" of the feeling occupying the second place in any feeling-of-feeling to be inherent in its quality as felt by the first feeling.[1] Individuality is qualitive. Thus, for example, according to theism God directly perceives, or (the same, though traditional theologians often had motives for not quite seeing this) he feels, our feelings as ours, as tinged with individuality—which of course is not His! The implication obviously is that the divine experience in some fashion includes ours. Certain theologies deny this; others—for good reasons, I believe—assert it. (This does not mean that they accept Bradley's

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[1] I venture to urge the reader to look up pp. 360–5 in Whitehead's *Process and Reality.*

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absolute monism, his denial of external, and indeed of all, relations. That some relations must be external is not in question, though it may seem to be.) That the social view of feeling is easy to think through is not to be maintained; it might, however, be worth thinking through, so far as possible.

The phrase "other mind" suggests the query, other than what? Why, of course: other than oneself. But this notion of self, is it so simple and unproblematic? Hume's puzzle, James's puzzle, the modern psychologists' puzzle, about personal identity, how conveniently and readily it is all forgotten! So then we know perfectly what "other" refers to. I wonder. As Wisdom has hinted, statements about persons may in principle be analysable into those about successive states of body and experience. Why then may we not say, with James and Whitehead, that the actual feeler or thinker of present thought and feeling is, not the self-identical personality which has been there all along, but an ego or subject which has come into being with the present experience? Just as "I" has a different referent when it issues from your lips than from mine, so, in a subtler way the word has a different referent each time it issues from my lips—unless, as in varying degrees is generally the case, the context shows that some relatively abstract fixed factor of individuality is in question, as if it is said, "I am a son of (so and so)". But suppose the sentence is, "I have just had a new idea". Surely the personality which has been there all along does not comprise this idea, or else the latter too must have been there all along. The personal integration actually owning the new idea is a new creation. For, until the least constituent of a whole is there, the whole is not there.

Suppose, again, one remembers a feeling from one's immediate past, say a feeling of keen anticipation which is just now being disappointed. The disappointed self is not the expecting self; for then the disappointment would be mere self-contradiction. There is a new self which feels the expectation of the former self (if not, there could be no disappointment), but this does not abolish the distinction between expectant and disappointed selves. There is a feeling of (just past) feeling. This is the structure of immediate memory, which is very different from recollection of occurrences long forgotten. Feelings or sensations of a fifth of a second ago do not need "recollecting", for they have yet to be "forgotten".

It is curious that those who compare doubts about our knowledge of other minds with doubts about memory often seem not to see that the two cases are analogous not merely as to being doubtful, but as to being cases of "otherness" of mind. These writers are subtle on one sort of analogy (degree and kind of uncertainty) but not on others which are also germane to their announced problems; or they are subtle about "families of resemblances" between diverse

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word-uses, languages, and games; but less so in dealing with topics like "other mind", or "matter".

Concerning the fallibility of memory—to which Wittgenstein and his followers refer—as with the fallibility of perception or immediate experience in general, it is the locus of the fallibility which is controversial. As Price says, one should not identify memory with conscious recollection,[1] which is a good deal more than mere memory, this "more" introducing various possibilities of error. (The explication of these possibilities must be left for another occasion.) The "errors of memory" are matters of common knowledge—so much so that it seems odd, and yet apparently it is necessary, to point out that this knowledge is not denied to those who hold that, none the less, there is in memory an element of literal "present feeling *of* genuinely past feeling". This is a contradiction only if one assumes that "past" is equivalent to "passed away", "absent", or "non-existent". (Peirce, Bergson, Whitehead, and others have set forth a contrasting view.)[2]

Since all direct self-knowledge is probably memory, even if, in part, of the past fifteenth or twentieth of a second, the query, Can I know another's feelings as directly as I know my own? seems scarcely distinguishable from this: Can I, as it were, "remember" the feelings of another? In the first place, if personal self-identity through time is relative, not absolute, then ordinary memory is, in principle, the very thing we are looking for; and in the second place, Peirce and Whitehead (wholly independently) have shown that the way to form a positive conception of the causal interrelatedness of events, to "answer Hume", is to admit analogues of memory connecting subjects of feeling more radically distinct than present and past selves in one (human) stream of consciousness ("personally ordered society of experient occasions").[3]

An example: suppose one suffers from a toothache. There are two ways of interpreting this: either the ache is simply my feeling, and what I feel is just this, my feeling itself; or else I feel feeling which is another's (singular or plural—and presumably nonhuman); this latter feeling being *felt by me as another's*, and thus, and in so far

[1] H. H. Price, *Thinking and Experience* (1953), pp. 58–60, 79 f. G. E. M. Anscombe, in her article, "The Reality of the Past", in *Philosophical Analysis* (ed. by Max Black), 1950, pp. 42, 47–8, seems to me to make this identification.
[2] See, e.g., Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 1.37f.
[3] See Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, pp. 235 f., 284; Peirce, *op. cit.*, 1.37–39, 167, 170, 311, 325, 6.21, 70, 99, 127–31, 133 f., 264, 268, 277, 332. Broad's declared inability to understand this doctrine of Whitehead's is perhaps not surprising. For he seems never to have noted the social structure of experience on which the entire theory is based. Certainly Peirce would have understood, for he had to a considerable extent noted it. (C. D. Broad, in *Mind*, 57 (1948), pp. 144 f.)

forth only, becoming *also* mine. In short, immediate feeling, such as physical suffering, either has or has not a social or participatory structure. Some say that it has. How shall we decide? By consulting the stock uses of words? But can there be stock ways of expressing a view which is still struggling to be born into clear consciousness?

However, perhaps there are ways. What do we mean by saying that the ache is "in the tooth"? Unhappiness is not said to be in a part of the body, but pains and physical pleasures are thus spoken of. Yet certainly they also qualify our total experience at the moment; for one is "in pain", or is suffering or enjoying. A double location or ownership seems implied, and this is exactly what our social theory calls for. How, then, does the pain belong not only to me, but also to the aching bodily member? "Well, simply you feel it there." What? The experience is perhaps illusory; the pain being solely in "me", or in my state of feeling, and not further localized in any particular physical region. But can so direct and positive an experience be illusory? The pain is given as *there*, in a small, fairly definite region—not necessarily in the tooth, for by mere feeling one does not know what a "tooth" is—yet as regionally "there", while the pain in my sprained wrist is definitely "elsewhere". How can pain be thus localized? The question is, or involves, one of meaning and direct experience, and not simply of scientific fact. For consider: The ache is not simply my present state of awareness, but rather something *of* which I am at present aware. (In naïve happiness, by contrast, this is scarcely the case: rather one is happily aware of various things other than the happiness.) I am, of course, aware of the pain in a certain manner, described by saying that I am suffering from it. But there must always be a datum, as well as a manner, of an awareness. I am here arguing somewhat as Moore did in his *Refutation of Idealism*, and in this question I should assimilate sensation and feeling, and *half* agree with Moore—half, because he forgot or denied what I have just called the "manner" of the awareness. Ducasse, in his opposing account, neatly includes the manner, and as neatly excludes the datum, or—what comes to the same—treats it as a bare structure devoid of quality.[1] The two sides of the painful experience may be expressed thus: the datum is an ache in which I irresistibly participate (why "irresistibly" we cannot here further explore), and through this participation I suffer, simply because an ache is itself a sort of suffering. (Sometimes there may also, in my participation, be an element of sado-masochistic enjoyment; and here many sophisticated psychologists and philosophers seem to turn naïve and miss the point.) Now a man in pain is not tormenting

[1] See *The Philosophy of G. E. Moore*, ed. by P. A. Schilpp, pp. 223–52. Moore, in his reply (pp. 653–60), finds difficulties with both views—as well he might, since they are converse half-truths!

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himself—nor is he being tormented merely by his own torment. Rather the torment is there and he is forced to share in it. (I am trying to describe the experience itself.)

Suppose now we recall, if we are not too proud to use science as at least a source of illustrations for possible meanings, that the body is a colony or society of cells—individual, living organisms, as physiologists and biologists view the matter. (Many philosophers evidently have a mental cramp preventing them from doing so; even out of hours, I suspect.) When some of my cells are subjected to forces which tend to injure them, I may feel pain. But how, if at all, do the cells feel? If they feel, their manner of feeling is presumably something like suffering; for they are being injured or disturbed. But in that case, what I am feeling may be the painful feelings literally *in* certain (nerve or brain?) cells, that is, felt by them. Not merely, then, that I have pain, and also they have; but rather, their painful feelings are felt by me as other than just my own feeling, this otherness being in fact essential to the "thereness" referred to above. Thereness of feeling in this sense—so runs our theory—is social otherness: to say that the first is given is to say that the second is given, and just as directly. True, the diverse individualities of the cells are not distinctly given; but this only proves that if we have direct feeling of the feeling of cells, it is indistinct, in spite of its directness. But so much we should have to hold anyway. Why? Because "direct and wholly distinct feeling of the feelings of others" defines "divine feeling". The indistinctness of our feeling adequately explains why the truth of the social theory is not a truism of common sense, and why without physiology we do not even know of the existence of "cells".

It must be admitted that I have not shown (or wished to show) that hypotheses about other human individuals' minds can be verified except by observing their behaviour.[1] But I have shown (1) that there is some degree of analogy between "self-knowledge" through memory and an hypothetical direct intuition of "other" minds, in that otherness is present even in the ordinary mnemonic case; and (2) that there is a further basis for analogy between such hypothetical intuition and the direct feeling of bodily (brain and nerve) states, where the otherness is much more extreme, since it spans the gap between metazoan and cellular individuality. We may now take a third step. That we do not feel the feelings of other human

[1] Some valuable discussions of the "argument by analogy" have recently appeared in *Mind*. See especially A. H. B. Allen, "Other Minds", *Mind*, 61 (1952). pp. 328-48. His theory of an identity of form between expressed emotions and their physical expressions can be carried somewhat farther than he carries it. See my "The Monistic Theory of Expression", *Journal of Philosophy*, 50 (1953), pp. 425-34.

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individuals is not because universally "no subject can feel the feelings of another", but for more particular reasons concerning the nature and status of human or vertebrate subjects. If A feels the feelings of B, then, in so far, A is superior to B, for A *also* his own aspects of feeling. Equality can obtain only so far as A fails to feel the feeling of B with full vividness or distinctness. In memory, for example, I do not necessarily surpass my remembered self in richness of content, because what I forget may outweigh the new content. One is here dealing with but a single type of adult human personality; if, by contrast, I were to have effective or appreciable direct awareness of my neighbours' feeling, I should be trying to synthesize more or less drastically divergent human personality types into one, and if I succeeded to any great extent, I should be equal to several men—indeed I should be superhuman. As Wisdom shrewdly hints, we need "isolation" of feeling from other human beings to maintain our own integrity.[1] In dealing with bodily cells, however, we are in fact radically superior, and so we can synthesize their many trivial feelings into one feeling on our own higher level (though still not without loss of distinctness; for we are not God).

Now for a fourth step. In the case of a being "in principle superior to all others", or "in every possible state of affairs superior to all others", the foregoing obstacles to a direct synthesis of the feelings of others cannot obtain. Such a being would not have a part of the world serving as body, as a set of inferior intermediaries; but rather the whole world would be felt as its given "body", i.e. its set of immediate data. And in this case, too, no loss of distinctness is required; indeed full distinctness follows from the definition; for otherwise the possibility of a superior would not be excluded. And now vanishes the last support for the notion (if offered as noncontroversial or harmless) that feelings of diverse individuals could not be compared save via behaviour. All *de facto* feelings, as directly and distinctly felt in one *de facto* synthesis, would have definite likenesses and differences in and for this synthesis or experience. Thus privacy and publicity are reconciled.

There is one aspect of current philosophizing in Britain that I find extremely odd. This is the fascination which "scepticism" exerts upon discussion. Speculative philosophy, metaphysics, is over and over again blandly presented as a process of toying with such propositions as, "One cannot really know the past—the future—other minds—physical things". Whereas I, naïve as I must have been, had long thought that metaphysicians were people concerned to see how much we could know, or what positive affirmations we could make (e.g. there must be One to whom all hearts are known), beyond the factual assertions of science, behold I now learn to my dismay that

[1] *Other Minds*, p. 217.

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metaphysics is the science of trying to see how little we can know—if anything.

Perhaps what has just been said applies in its full force only to Wisdom, but it applies to him more than I should have believed had I not read him. If philosophy is indeed the process of resolving metaphysical puzzles regarding how little we can know, it seems a rather trivial affair. It does succeed, brilliantly enough, in showing how pretended or superficial doubts or denials like some of Russell's can be fairly dissolved as baseless, thus restoring the semantic confidence of daily life. In short, philosophy now cures that intellectual disease which it has itself chiefly been.

But how if the disease we want cured is not confusion in philosophy (or British philosophy, or a part of it) so much as in everyday life and religion; also confusion and disconnection between religion, science, art, and everyday life, or between specialized abstractions and concrete experiences? Or again, the disease of dullness, apathy, or despair, in which we are aware of numerous details and middle-sized generalities of life—all open to cynical comment as defective or insignificant compared to the infinity of our ideal demands and sense of the possible—but are not aware, or so it seems, even in the vaguest way, of a value for the whole of life in space and time, in men, animals, and "hundreds of thousands of inhabitable planets"; or of any permanence of achievement, as men die and, for all we can see, their species finally dies also, or, even if it continues, must at any given moment have lost all but a vanishingly small fraction of all the wealth of experience which, through millennia, has been enjoyed. It is the elementary outline or generic idea (not the concrete actuality—for that only omniscience can distinctly know) of an enduring and inclusive value that men look to philosophers to clarify. Perhaps it is time to resume this task, somewhat illuminated (one may hope) by the astute reflections upon word uses which Wittgenstein and others have recently given us.

It follows from the arguments in this article that the universal aspect of value must be some form or aspect of the social structure of experience—as experience *of* experience, feeling of others' feeling, thinking of others' thinking, always, of course, with at least some degree of self-creative novelty or "emergent synthesis"—together with a universal contrast between the supreme or divine creative sociality and the nondivine forms. Creative participation, divine and otherwise—this is the clue. It has been known dimly to all ages. Wisdom ends an essay (ostensibly, at least, concerned with deity) by referring to love as the highest ideal. But he does not seem to see that love as literal and unstinted participation defines all love that falls short of such full or sheer participation, not conversely. Many a theologian has likewise not seen it; for to define love as

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simply above participation ("impassible". was the technical term) is to miss the point about as decisively as to suppose that all love falls short of participation. Is there any higher idea than that of (creative) feeling of feeling, experience of experience? One might guess the negative answer from the difficulty of attributing even minimal forms of such literal sharing of life to men or animals, together with the indications that some form of this sharing can be seen as the goal of all their efforts, and the subconscious answer to the philosophers' questions, What is matter? and, How do we know other minds?

We know other minds by analogical extensions of our direct participations in the feelings, thoughts, or experiences, of some instances (cellular, inner-bodily, perhaps divine) of other mind; we know matter by a mode of such extension in which the participation is so vague or attenuated with respect to qualities of feeling, and so heightened or sharpened with respect to spatio-temporal relationships, that it easily appears, and for many purposes is as if, we were dealing with bare "extended substances", devoid of any life or experience of their own. The explanation of both the vagueness and the sharpness seems to lie in the same feature of "merely material" or "inorganic" things: the relative triviality of their constituent individuals, hence their remoteness from, and individual insignificance for, our modes of experience; hence also the confinement of their immediate effects to small portions of the spatial system of interacting experiences (i.e. sharp localization) and their lack of appreciable individual variations or eccentricities, making possible highly precise statistical laws of interaction—ultimately with our own bodies and thus with our minds in perception.

The idea of participation not only permits, it implies, an absolute infinity of potential modulations; for where is the non-arbitrary stopping-point between the absurd restrictions to one's own qualities of present experience, and the admission that the possible varieties of "shared experience"—including divine sharings, and indirect or imaginative sharings, as well as highly abstract or schematic ones—are co-extensive with the infinity of possible types of knowing and knowable reality? Either some arbitrarily unmodulated admission or denial of participations, or their recognition as the potentially unlimited class of all possible modulations of experience and process—these are the alternatives. In more familar terms, "love" is or is not the ultimate and universal idea.

By many philosophers the decision is made without discussion, and perhaps almost without thought.

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MINDS, MACHINES AND GÖDEL[1]

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GÖDEL's Theorem seems to me to prove that Mechanism is false, that is, that minds cannot be explained as machines. So also has it seemed to many other people: almost every mathematical logician I have put the matter to has confessed to similar thoughts, but has felt reluctant to commit himself definitely until he could see the whole argument set out, with all objections fully stated and properly met.[2] This I attempt to do.

Gödel's theorem states that in any consistent system which is strong enough to produce simple arithmetic there are formulae which cannot be proved-in-the-system, but which we can see to be true. Essentially, we consider the formula which says, in effect, "This formula is unprovable-in-the-system". If this formula were provable-in-the-system, we should have a contradiction: for if it were provable-in-the-system, then it would not be unprovable-in-the-system, so that "This formula is unprovable-in-the-system" would be false: equally, if it were provable-in-the-system, then it would not be false, but would be true, since in any consistent system nothing false can be proved-in-the-system, but only truths. So the formula "This formula is unprovable-in-the-system" is not provable-in-the-system, but unprovable-in-the-system. Further, if the formula "This formula is unprovable-in-the-system" is unprovable-in-the-system, then it is true that that formula is unprovable-in-the-system, that is, "This formula is unprovable-in-the-system" is true.

The foregoing argument is very fiddling, and difficult to grasp fully: it is helpful to put the argument the other way round, consider the possibility that "This formula is unprovable-in-the-system" might be false, show that that is impossible, and thus that the formula is true; whence it follows that it is unprovable. Even so, the argument remains persistently unconvincing: we feel that there must be a catch in it somewhere. The whole labour of Gödel's theorem is to show that there is no catch anywhere, and that the result can

[1] A paper read to the Oxford Philosophical Society on October 30, 1959.
[2] See A. M. Turing: "Computing Machinery and Intelligence": *Mind*, 1950, pp. 433–60, reprinted in *The World of Mathematics*, edited by James R. Newman, pp. 2099–123; and K. R. Popper: "Indeterminism in Quantum Physics and Classical Physics"; *British Journal for Philosophy of Science*, Vol. I (1951), pp. 179–88. The question is touched upon by Paul Rosenbloom; *Elements of Mathematical Logic*; pp. 207–8; Ernest Nagel and James R. Newman; *Gödel's proof*, pp. 100—2; and by Hartley Rogers; *Theory of Recursive Functions and Effective Computability* (mimeographed), 1957, Vol. I, pp. 152 ff.

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be established by the most rigorous deduction; it holds for all formal systems which are (i) consistent, (ii) adequate for simple arithmetic —i.e. contain the natural numbers and the operations of addition and multiplication—and it shows that they are incomplete—i.e. contain unprovable, though perfectly meaningful, formulae, some of which, moreover, we, standing outside the system, can see to be true.

Gödel's theorem must apply to cybernetical machines, because it is of the essence of being a machine, that it should be a concrete instantiation of a formal system. It follows that given any machine which is consistent and capable of doing simple arithmetic, there is a formula which it is incapable of producing as being true—i.e. the formula is unprovable-in-the-system—but which we can see to be true. It follows that no machine can be a complete or adequate model of the mind, that minds are essentially different from machines.

We understand by a cybernetical machine an apparatus which performs a set of operations according to a definite set of rules. Normally we "programme" a machine: that is, we give it a set of instructions about what it is to do in each eventuality; and we feed in the initial "information" on which the machine is to perform its calculations. When we consider the possibility that the mind might be a cybernetical mechanism we have such a model in view; we suppose that the brain is composed of complicated neural circuits, and that the information fed in by the senses is "processed" and acted upon or stored for future use. If it is such a mechanism, then given the way in which it is programmed—the way in which it is "wired up"—and the information which has been fed into it, the response—the "output"—is determined, and could, granted sufficient time, be calculated. Our idea of a machine is just this, that its behaviour is completely determined by the way it is made and the incoming "stimuli": there is no possibility of its acting on its own: given a certain form of construction and a certain input of information, then it must act in a certain specific way. We, however, shall be concerned not with what a machine *must* do, but with what it *can* do. That is, instead of considering the whole set of rules which together determine exactly what a machine will do in given circumstances, we shall consider only an outline of those rules, which will delimit the possible responses of the machine, but not completely. The complete rules will determine the operations completely at every stage; at every stage there will be a definite instruction, e.g. "If the number is prime and greater than two add one and divide by two: if it is not prime, divide by its smallest factor": we, however, will consider the possibility of there being alternative instructions, e.g. "In a fraction you may divide top and bottom by *any* number which is a factor of both numerator and denominator". In thus

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relaxing the specification of our model, so that it is no longer completely determinist, though still entirely mechanistic, we shall be able to take into account a feature often proposed for mechanical models of the mind, namely that they should contain a randomizing device. One could build a machine where the choice between a number of alternatives was settled by, say, the number of radium atoms to have disintegrated in a given container in the past half-minute. It is *prima facie* plausible that our brains should be liable to random effects: a cosmic ray might well be enough to trigger off a neural impulse. But clearly in a machine a randomizing device could not be introduced to choose any alternative whatsoever: it can only be permitted to choose between a number of allowable alternatives. It is all right to add *any* number chosen at random to both sides of an equation, but not to add one number to one side and another to the other. It is all right to choose to prove one theorem of Euclid rather than another, or to use one method rather than another, but not to "prove" something which is not true, or to use a "method of proof" which is not valid. Any randomizing devices must allow choices only between those operations which will not lead to inconsistency: which is exactly what the relaxed specification of our model specifies. Indeed, one might put it this way: instead of considering what a completely determined machine *must* do, we shall consider what a machine might be able to do if it had a randomizing device that acted whenever there were two or more operations possible, none of which could lead to inconsistency.

If such a machine were built to produce theorems about arithmetic (in many ways the simplest part of mathematics), it would have only a finite number of components, and so there would be only a finite number of types of operation it could do, and only a finite number of initial assumptions it could operate on. Indeed, we can go further, and say that there would only be a *definite* number of types of operation, and of initial assumptions, that could be built into it. Machines are definite: anything which was indefinite or infinite we should not count as a machine. Note that we say number of *types* of operation, not number of operations. Given sufficient time, and provided that it did not wear out, a machine could go on repeating an operation indefinitely: it is merely that there can be only a definite number of different *sorts* of operation it can perform.

If there are only a definite number of types of operation and initial assumptions built into the system, we can represent them all by suitable symbols written down on paper. We can parallel the operation by rules ("rules of inference" or "axiom schemata") allowing us to go from one or more formulae (or even from no formula at all) to another formula, and we can parallel the initial

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assumptions (if any) by a set of initial formulae ("primitive proposi-
tions", "postulates" or "axioms"). Once we have represented these
on paper, we can represent every single operation: all we need do
is to give formulae representing the situation before and after the
operation, and note which rule is being invoked. We can thus
represent on paper any possible sequence of operations the machine
might perform. However long the machine went on operating, we
could, given enough time, paper and patience, write down an
analogue of the machine's operations. This analogue would in fact
be a formal proof: every operation of the machine is represented by
the application of one of the rules: and the conditions which deter-
mine for the machine whether an operation can be performed in a
certain situation, become, in our representation, conditions which
settle whether a rule can be applied to a certain formula, i.e. formal
conditions of applicability. Thus, construing our rules as rules of
inference, we shall have a proof-sequence of formulae, each one
being written down in virtue of some formal rule of inference having
been applied to some previous formula or formulae (except, of
course, for the initial formulae, which are given because they
represent initial assumptions built into the system). The conclusions
it is possible for the machine to produce as being true will therefore
correspond to the theorems that can be proved in the corresponding
formal system. We now construct a Gödelian formula in this formal
system. This formula cannot be *proved-in-the-system*. Therefore the
machine cannot produce the corresponding formula as being true.
But *we* can see that the Gödelian formula is true: any rational
being could follow Gödel's argument, and convince himself that
the Gödelian formula, although unprovable-in-the-given-system, was
nonetheless—in fact, for that very reason—true. Now any mechani-
cal model of the mind must include a mechanism which can enunciate
truths of arithmetic, because this is something which minds can do:
in fact, it is easy to produce mechanical models which will in many
respects produce truths of arithmetic far better than human beings
can. But in this one respect they cannot do so well: in that for every
machine there is a truth which it cannot produce as being true, but
which a mind can. This shows that a machine cannot be a complete
and adequate model of the mind. It cannot do *everything* that a
mind can do, since however much it can do, there is always some-
thing which it cannot do, and a mind can. This is not to say that we
cannot build a machine to simulate *any* desired piece of mind-like
behaviour: it is only that we cannot build a machine to simulate
every piece of mind-like behaviour. We can (or shall be able to one
day) build machines capable of reproducing bits of mind-like
behaviour, and indeed of outdoing the performances of human
minds: but however good the machine is, and however much better

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it can do in nearly all respects than a human mind can, it always has this one weakness, this one thing which it cannot do, whereas a mind can. The Gödelian formula is the Achilles' heel of the cybernetical machine. And therefore we cannot hope ever to produce a machine that will be able to do all that a mind can do: we can never, not even in principle, have a mechanical model of the mind.

This conclusion will be highly suspect to some people. They will object first that we cannot have it both that a machine *can* simulate *any* piece of mind-like behaviour, and that it *cannot* simulate *every* piece. To some it is a contradiction: to them it is enough to point out that there is no contradiction between the fact that for any natural number there can be produced a greater number, and the fact that a number cannot be produced greater than every number. We can use the same analogy also against those who, finding a formula their first machine cannot produce as being true, concede that that machine is indeed inadequate, but thereupon seek to construct a second, more adequate, machine, in which the formula *can* be produced as being true. This they can indeed do: but then the second machine will have a Gödelian formula all of its own, constructed by applying Gödel's procedure to the formal system which represents its (the second machine's) own, enlarged, scheme of operations. And this formula the second machine will not be able to produce as being true, while a mind will be able to see that it is true. And if now a third machine is constructed, able to do what the second machine was unable to do, exactly the same will happen: there will be yet a third formula, the Gödelian formula for the formal system corresponding to the third machine's scheme of operations, which the third machine is unable to produce as being true, while a mind will still be able to see that it is true. And so it will go on. However complicated a machine we construct, it will, if it is a machine, correspond to a formal system, which in turn will be liable to the Gödel procedure for finding a formula unprovable-in-that-system. This formula the machine will be unable to produce as being true, although a mind can see that it is true. And so the machine will still not be an adequate model of the mind. We are trying to produce a model of the mind which is mechanical— which is essentially "dead"—but the mind, being in fact "alive", can always go one better than any formal, ossified, dead, system can. Thanks to Gödel's theorem, the mind always has the last word.

A second objection will now be made. The procedure whereby the Gödelian formula is constructed is a standard procedure—only so could we be sure that a Gödelian formula can be constructed for every formal system. But if it is a standard procedure, then a machine should be able to be programmed to carry it out too. We could construct a machine with the usual operations, and in addition an

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operation of going through the Gödel procedure, and then producing
the conclusion of that procedure as being true; and then repeating
the procedure, and so on, as often as required. This would correspond
to having a system with an additional rule of inference which allowed
one to add, as a theorem, the Gödelian formula of the rest of
the formal system, and then the Gödelian formula of this new,
strengthened formal system, and so on. It would be tantamount
to adding to the original formal system an infinite sequence of
axioms, each the Gödelian formula of the system hitherto obtained.
Yet even so, the matter is not settled: for the machine with a
Gödelizing operator, as we might call it, is a *different* machine from
the machines without such an operator; and, although the machine
with the operator would be able to do those things in which the
machines without the operator were outclassed by a mind, yet we
might expect a mind, faced with a machine that possessed a
Gödelizing operator, to take this into account, and out-Gödel the
new machine, Gödelizing operator and all. This has, in fact, proved
to be the case. Even if we adjoin to a formal system the infinite
set of axioms consisting of the successive Gödelian formulae, the
resulting system is still incomplete, and contains a formula which
cannot be proved-in-the-system, although a rational being can,
standing outside the system, see that it is true.[1] We had expected
this, for even if an infinite set of axioms were added, they would have
to be specified by some finite rule or specification, and this further
rule or specification could then be taken into account by a mind
considering the enlarged formal system. In a sense, just because the
mind has the last word, it can always pick a hole in any formal
system presented to it as a model of its own workings. The mechanical
model must be, in some sense, finite and definite: and then the mind
can always go one better.

This is the answer to one objection put forward by Turing.[2] He
argues that the limitation to the powers of a machine do not amount
to anything much. Although each individual machine is incapable
of getting the right answer to some questions, after all each indivi-
dual human being is fallible also: and in any case "our superiority
can only be felt on such an occasion in relation to the one machine
over which we have scored our petty triumph. There would be no
question of triumphing simultaneously over *all* machines". But this
is not the point. We are not discussing whether machines or minds
are superior, but whether they are the same. In some respect machines
are undoubtedly superior to human minds; and the question on
which they are stumped is admittedly, a rather niggling, even

[1] Gödel's original proof applies; *v.* § 1 init. § 6 init. of his Lectures at the
Institute of Advanced Study, Princeton, N.J., U.S.A., 1934.
[2] *Mind*, 1950, pp. 444–5; Newman, p. 2110.

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trivial, question. But it is enough, enough to show that the machine is *not the same* as a mind. True, the machine can do many things that a human mind cannot do: but if there is of necessity something that the machine cannot do, though the mind can, then, however trivial the matter is, we cannot equate the two, and cannot hope ever to have a mechanical model that will adequately represent the mind. Nor does it signify that it is only an individual machine we have triumphed over: for the triumph is not over only *an* individual machine, but over *any* individual that anybody cares to specify— in Latin *quivis* or *quilibet*. not *quidam*—and a mechanical model of a mind must be an individual machine. Although it is true that any particular "triumph" of a mind over a machine could be "trumped" by another machine able to produce the answer the first machine could not produce, so that "there is no question of triumphing simultaneously over all machines", yet this is irrelevant. What is at issue is not the unequal contest between one mind and all machines, but whether there could be any, single, machine that could do all a mind can do. For the mechanist thesis to hold water, it must be possible, in principle, to produce a model, a single model, which can do everything the mind can do. It is like a game.[1] The mechanist has first turn. He produces a—*any*, but only a *definite one* —mechanical model of the mind. I point to something that it cannot do, but the mind can. The mechanist is free to modify his example, but each time he does so, I am entitled to look for defects in the revised model. If the mechanist can devise a model that I cannot find fault with, his thesis is established: if he cannot, then it is not proven: and since—as it turns out—he necessarily cannot, it is refuted. To succeed, he must be able to produce some definite mechanical model of the mind—any one he likes, but one he can specify, and will stick to. But since he cannot, in principle cannot, produce any mechanical model that is adequate, even though the point of failure is a minor one, he is bound to fail, and mechanism must be false.

Deeper objections can still be made. Gödel's theorem applies to deductive systems, and human beings are not confined to making only deductive inferences. Gödel's theorem applies only to consistent systems, and one may have doubts about how far it is permissible to assume that human beings are consistent. Gödel's theorem applies only to formal systems, and there is no *a priori* bound to human ingenuity which rules out the possibility of our contriving some replica of humanity which was not representable by a formal system.

[1] For a similar type of argument, see J. R. Lucas: "The Lesbian Rule"; PHILOSOPHY, July 1955, pp. 202–6; and "On not worshipping Facts"; *The Philosophical Quarterly*, April 1958, p. 144.

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Human beings are not confined to making deductive inferences, and it has been urged by C. G. Hempel[1] and Hartley Rogers[2] that a fair model of the mind would have to allow for the possibility of making non-deductive inferences, and these might provide a way of escaping the Gödel result. Hartley Rogers makes the specific suggestion that the machine should be programmed to entertain various propositions which had not been proved or disproved, and on occasion to add them to its list of axioms. Fermat's last theorem or Goldbach's conjecture might thus be added. If subsequently their inclusion was found to lead to a contradiction, they would be dropped again, and indeed in those circumstances their negations would be added to the list of theorems. In this sort of way a machine might well be constructed which was able to produce as true certain formulae which could not be proved from its axioms according to its rules of inference. And therefore the method of demonstrating the mind's superiority over the machine might no longer work.

The construction of such a machine, however, presents difficulties. It cannot accept all unprovable formulae, and add them to its axioms, or it will find itself accepting both the Gödelian formula and its negation, and so be inconsistent. Nor would it do if it accepted the first of each pair of undecidable formulae, and, having added that to its axioms, would no longer regard its negation as undecidable, and so would never accept it too: for it might happen on the wrong member of the pair: it might accept the negation of the Gödelian formula rather than the Gödelian formula itself. And the system constituted by a normal set of axioms with the negation of the Gödelian formula adjoined, although not inconsistent, is an unsound system, not admitting of the natural interpretation. It is something like non-Desarguian geometries in two dimensions: not actually inconsistent, but rather wrong, sufficiently much so to disqualify it from serious consideration. A machine which was liable to infelicities of that kind would be no model for the human mind.

It becomes clear that rather careful criteria of selection of unprovable formulae will be needed. Hartley Rogers suggests some possible ones. But once we have rules generating new axioms, even if the axioms generated are only provisionally accepted, and are liable to be dropped again if they are found to lead to inconsistency, then we can set about doing a Gödel on this system, as on any other. We are in the same case as when we had a rule generating the infinite set of Gödelian formulae as axioms. In short, however a machine is designed, it must proceed either at random or according to definite rules. In so far as its procedure is random, we cannot outsmart it:

[1] In private conversation.
[2] *Theory of Recursive Functions and Effective Computability*, 1957, Vol. I, pp. 152 ff.

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but its performance is not going to be a convincing parody of intelligent behaviour: in so far as its procedure is in accordance with definite rules, the Gödel method can be used to produce a formula which the machine, according to those rules, cannot assert as true, although we, standing outside the system, can see it to be true.[1]

Gödel's theorem applies only to consistent systems. All that we can prove *formally* is that *if* the system is complete, then the Gödelian formula is unprovable-in-the-system. To be able to say categorically that the Gödelian formula is unprovable-in-the-system, and therefore true, we must not only be dealing with a consistent system, but be able to say that it is consistent. And, as Gödel showed in his second theorem—a corollary of his first—it is impossible to prove in a consistent system that that system is consistent. Thus in order to fault the machine by producing a formula of which we can say both that it is true and that the machine cannot produce it as true, we have to be able to say that the machine (or, rather, its corresponding formal system) is consistent; and there is no absolute proof of this. All we can do is to examine the machine and see if it appears consistent. There always remains the possibility of some inconsistency not yet detected. At best we can say that the machine is consistent, provided we are. But by what right can we do this? Gödel's second theorem seems to show that a man cannot assert his own consistency, and so Hartley Rogers[2] argues that we cannot really use Gödel's first theorem to counter the mechanist thesis unless we can say that "there are distinctive attributes which enable a human being to transcend this last limitation and assert his own consistency while still remaining consistent".

A man's untutored reaction if his consistency is questioned is to affirm it vehemently: but this, in view of Gödel's second theorem, is taken by some philosophers as evidence of his actual inconsistency. Professor Putnam[3] has suggested that human beings are machines, but inconsistent machines. If a machine were wired to correspond to an inconsistent system, then there would be no well-formed formula which it could not produce as true; and so in no way could it be proved to be inferior to a human being. Nor could we make its inconsistency a reproach to it—are not men inconsistent too? Certainly women are, and politicians; and even male non-politicians

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[1] Gödel's original proof applies if the rule is such as to generate a primitive recursive class of additional formulae; *v.* § 1 init. and § 6 init. of his Lectures at the Institute of Advanced Study, Princeton, N.J., U.S.A., 1934. It is in fact sufficient that the class be recursively enumerable. *v.* Barkley Rosser: "Extensions of some theorems of Gödel and Church", *Journal of Symbolic Logic*, Vol. I, 1936, pp. 87–91.

[2] Op. cit., p. 154.

[3] University of Princeton, N.J., U.S.A. in private conversation.

contradict themselves sometimes, and a single inconsistency is enough to make a system inconsistent.

The fact that we are all sometimes inconsistent cannot be gainsaid, but from this it does not follow that we are tantamount to inconsistent systems. Our inconsistencies are mistakes rather than set policies. They correspond to the occasional malfunctioning of a machine, not its normal scheme of operations. Witness to this that we eschew inconsistencies when we recognize them for what they are. If we really were inconsistent machines, we should remain content with our inconsistencies, and would happily affirm both halves of a contradiction. Moreover, we would be prepared to say absolutely anything—which we are not. It is easily shown[1] that in an inconsistent formal system everything is provable, and the requirement of consistency turns out to be just that not everything can be proved in it—it is not the case that "anything goes". This surely is a characteristic of the mental operations of human beings: they are selective: they do discriminate between favoured—true— and unfavoured—false—statements: when a person is prepared to say anything, and is prepared to contradict himself without any qualm or repugnance, then he is adjudged to have "lost his mind". Human beings, although not perfectly consistent, are not so much inconsistent as fallible.

A fallible but self-correcting machine would still be subject to Gödel's results. Only a fundamentally inconsistent machine would escape. Could we have a fundamentally inconsistent, but at the same time self-correcting machine, which both would be free of Gödel's results and yet would not be trivial and entirely unlike a human being? A machine with a rather *recherché* inconsistency wired into it, so that for all normal purposes it was consistent, but when presented with the Gödelian sentence was able to prove it?

There are all sorts of ways in which undesirable proofs might be obviated. We might have a rule that whenever we have proved p and not-p, we examine their proofs and reject the longer. Or we might arrange the axioms and rules of inference in a certain order, and when a proof leading to an inconsistency is proffered, see what axioms and rules are required for it, and reject that axiom or rule which comes last in the ordering. In some such way as this we could have an inconsistent system, with a stop-rule, so that the inconsistency was never allowed to come out in the form of an inconsistent formula.

The suggestion at first sight seems attractive: yet there is something deeply wrong. Even though we might preserve the façade of consistency by having a rule that whenever two inconsistent formulae

[1] See, e.g., Alonzo Church: *Introduction to Mathematical Logic*, Princeton, Vol. I, § 17, p. 108.

appear we were to reject the one with the longer proof, yet such a
rule would be repugnant in our logical sense. Even the less arbitrary
suggestions are too arbitrary. No longer does the system operate
with certain definite rules of inference on certain definite formulae.
Instead, the rules apply, the axioms are true, provided . . . we do
not happen to find it inconvenient. We no longer know where we
stand. One application of the rule of Modus Ponens may be accepted
while another is rejected: on one occasion an axiom may be true,
on another apparently false. The system will have ceased to be a
formal logical system, and the machine will barely qualify for the
title of a model for the mind. For it will be far from resembling the
mind in its operations: the mind does indeed try out dubious axioms
and rules of inference; but if they are found to lead to contradiction,
they are rejected altogether. We try out axioms and rules of inference
provisionally—true: but we do not keep them, once they are found
to lead to contradictions. We may seek to replace them with others,
we may feel that our formalization is at fault, and that though some
axiom or rule of inference of this sort is required, we have not been
able to formulate it quite correctly: but we do not retain the faulty
formulations without modification, merely with the proviso that
when the argument leads to a contradiction we refuse to follow it.
To do this would be utterly irrational. We should be in the position
that on some occasions when supplied with the premisses of a Modus
Ponens, say, we applied the rule and allowed the conclusion, and
on other occasions we refused to apply the rule, and disallowed the
conclusion. A person, or a machine, which did this without being
able to give a good reason for so doing, would be accounted arbitrary
and irrational. It is part of the concept of "arguments" or "reasons"
that they are in some sense general and universal: that if Modus
Ponens is a valid method of arguing when I am establishing a desired
conclusion, it is a valid method also when you, my opponent, are
establishing a conclusion I do not want to accept. We cannot pick
and choose the times when a form of argument is to be valid; not
if we are to be reasonable. It is of course true, that with our informal
arguments, which are not fully formalized, we do distinguish between
arguments which are at first sight similar, adding further reasons
why they are nonetheless not really similar: and it might be main-
tained that a machine might likewise be entitled to distinguish
between arguments at first sight similar, if it had good reason for
doing so. And it might further be maintained that the machine had
good reason for rejecting those patterns of argument it did reject,
indeed the best of reasons, namely the avoidance of contradiction.
But that, if it is a reason at all, is too good a reason. We do not lay it
to a man's credit that he avoids contradiction merely by refusing
to accept those arguments which would lead him to it, for no other

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reason than that otherwise he would be led to it. Special pleading rather than sound argument is the name for that type of reasoning. No credit accrues to a man who, clever enough to see a few moves of argument ahead, avoids being brought to acknowledge his own inconsistency, by stonewalling as soon as he sees where the argument will end. Rather, we account him inconsistent too, not, in his case, because he affirmed and denied the same proposition, but because he used and refused to use the same rule of inference. A stop-rule on actually enunciating an inconsistency is not enough to save an inconsistent machine from being called inconsistent.

The possibility yet remains that we are inconsistent, and there is no stop-rule, but the inconsistency is so *recherché* that it has never turned up. After all, *naïve* set-theory, which was deeply embedded in common-sense ways of thinking did not turn out to be inconsistent. Can we be sure that a similar fate is not in store for simple arithmetic too? In a sense we cannot, in spite of our great feeling of certitude that our system of whole numbers which can be added and multiplied together is never going to prove inconsistent. It is just conceivable we might find we had formalized it incorrectly. If we had, we should try and formulate anew our intuitive concept of number, as we have our intuitive concept of a set. If we did this, we should of course recast our system: our present axioms and rules of inference would be utterly rejected: there would be no question of our using and not using them in an "inconsistent" fashion. We should, once we had recast the system, be in the same position as we are now, possessed of a system believed to be consistent, but not provably so. But then could there not be some other inconsistency? It is indeed a possibility. But again no inconsistency once detected will be tolerated. We are determined not to be inconsistent, and are resolved to root out inconsistency, should any appear. Thus, although we can never be completely certain or completely free of the risk of having to think out our mathematics again, the ultimate position must be one of two: either we have a system of simple arithmetic which to the best of our knowledge and belief is consistent: or there is no such system possible. In the former case we are in the same position as at present: in the latter, if we find that no system containing simple arithmetic can be free of contradictions, we shall have to abandon not merely the whole of mathematics and the mathematical sciences, but the whole of thought.

It may still be maintained that although a man must in this sense assume, he cannot properly affirm, his own consistency without thereby belying his words. We may be consistent; indeed we have every reason to hope that we are: but a necessary modesty forbids us from saying so. Yet this is not quite what Gödel's second theorem states. Gödel has shown that in a consistent system a formula

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stating the consistency of the system cannot be proved *in that system*. It follows that a machine, if consistent, cannot produce as true an assertion of its own consistency: hence also that a mind, *if it were really a machine*, could not reach the conclusion that it was a consistent one. For a mind which is not a machine no such conclusion follows. All that Gödel has proved is that a mind cannot produce a formal proof of the consistency of a formal system inside the system itself: but there is no objection to going outside the system and no objection to producing informal arguments for the consistency either of a formal system or of something less formal and less systematized. Such informal arguments will not be able to be completely formalized: but then the whole tenor of Gödel's results is that we ought not to ask, and cannot obtain, complete formalization. And although it would have been nice if we could have obtained them, since completely formalized arguments are more coercive than informal ones, yet since we cannot have all our arguments cast into that form, we must not hold it against informal arguments that they are informal or regard them all as utterly worthless. It therefore seems to me both proper and reasonable for a mind to assert its own consistency: proper, because although machines, as we might have expected, are unable to reflect fully on their own performance and powers, yet to be able to be self-conscious in this way is just what we expect of minds: and reasonable, for the reasons given. Not only can we fairly say simply that we *know* we are consistent, apart from our mistakes, but we must in any case *assume* that we are, if thought is to be possible at all; moreover we are selective, we will not, as inconsistent machines would, say anything and everything whatsoever: and finally we can, in a sense, *decide* to be consistent, in the sense that we can resolve not to tolerate inconsistencies in our thinking and speaking, and to eliminate them, if ever they should appear, by withdrawing and cancelling one limb of the contradiction.

We can see how we might almost have expected Gödel's theorem to distinguish self-conscious beings from inanimate objects. The essence of the Gödelian formula is that it is self-referring. It says that "This formula is unprovable-in-this-system". When carried over to a machine, the formula is specified in terms which depend on the particular machine in question. The machine is being asked a question about its own processes. We are asking it to be self-conscious, and say what things it can and cannot do. Such questions notoriously lead to paradox. At one's first and simplest attempts to philosophize, one becomes entangled in questions of whether when one knows something one knows that one knows it, and what, when one is thinking of oneself, is being thought about, and what is doing the thinking. After one has been puzzled and bruised by this

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problem for a long time, one learns not to press these questions: the concept of a conscious being is, implicitly, realized to be different from that of an unconscious object. In saying that a conscious being knows something, we are saying not only that he knows it, but that he knows that he knows it, and that he knows that he knows that he knows it, and so on, as long as we care to pose the question: there is, we recognize, an infinity here, but it is not an infinite regress in the bad sense, for it is the questions that peter out, as being pointless, rather than the answers. The questions are felt to be pointless because the concept contains within itself the idea of being able to go on answering such questions indefinitely. Although conscious beings have the power of going on, we do not wish to exhibit this simply as a succession of tasks they are able to perform, nor do we see the mind as an infinite sequence of selves and super-selves and super-super-selves. Rather, we insist that a conscious being is a unity, and though we talk about parts of the mind, we do so only as a metaphor, and will not allow it to be taken literally.

The paradoxes of consciousness arise because a conscious being can be aware of itself, as well as of other things, and yet cannot really be construed as being divisible into parts. It means that a conscious being can deal with Gödelian questions in a way in which a machine cannot, because a conscious being can both consider itself and its performance and yet not be other than that which did the performance. A machine can be made in a manner of speaking to "consider" its own performance, but it cannot take this "into account" without thereby becoming a different machine, namely the old machine with a "new part" added. But it is inherent in our idea of a conscious mind that it can reflect upon itself and criticize its own performances, and no extra part is required to do this: it is already complete, and has no Achilles' heel.

The thesis thus begins to become more a matter of conceptual analysis than mathematical discovery. This is borne out by considering another argument put forward by Turing.[1] So far, we have constructed only fairly simple and predictable artefacts. When we increase the complexity of our machines there may, perhaps, be surprises in store for us. He draws a parallel with a fission pile. Below a certain "critical" size, nothing much happens: but above the critical size, the sparks begin to fly. So too, perhaps, with brains and machines. Most brains and all machines are, at present, "subcritical"—they react to incoming stimuli in a stodgy and uninteresting way, have no ideas of their own, can produce only stock responses —but a few brains at present, and possibily some machines in the future, are super-critical, and scintillate on their own account.

[1] *Mind*, 1950, p. 454; Newman, p. 2117–18.

Turing is suggesting that it is only a matter of complexity, and that above a certain level of complexity a qualitative difference appears, so that "super-critical" machines will be quite unlike the simple ones hitherto envisaged.

This may be so. Complexity often does introduce qualitative differences. Although it sounds implausible, it might turn out that above a certain level of complexity, a machine ceased to be predictable, even in principle, and started doing things on its own account, or, to use a very revealing phrase, it might begin to have a mind of its own. It might begin to have a mind of its own. It would begin to have a mind of its own when it was no longer entirely predictable and entirely docile, but was capable of doing things which we recognized as intelligent, and not just mistakes or random shots, but which we had not programmed into it. But then it would cease to be a machine, within the meaning of the act. What is at stake in the mechanist debate is not how minds are, or might be, brought into being, but how they operate. It is essential for the mechanist thesis that the mechanical model of the mind shall operate according to "mechanical principles", that is, that we can understand the operation of the whole in terms of the operations of its parts, and the operation of each part either shall be determined by its initial state and the construction of the machine, or shall be a random choice between a determinate number of determinate operations. If the mechanist produces a machine which is so complicated that this ceases to hold good of it, then it is no longer a machine for the purposes of our discussion, no matter how it was constructed. We should say, rather, that he had created a mind, in the same sort of sense as we procreate people at present. There would then be two ways of bringing new minds into the world, the traditional way, by begetting children born of women, and a new way by constructing very, very complicated systems of, say, valves and relays. When talking of the second way, we should take care to stress that although what was created looked like a machine, it was not one really, because it was not just the total of its parts. One could not tell what it was going to do merely by knowing the way in which it was built up and the initial state of its parts: one could not even tell the limits of what it could do, for even when presented with a Gödel-type question, it got the answer right. In fact we should say briefly that any system which was not floored by the Gödel question was *eo ipso* not a Turing machine, i.e. not a machine within the meaning of the act.

If the proof of the falsity of mechanism is valid, it is of the greatest consequence for the whole of philosophy. Since the time of Newton, the bogey of mechanist determinism has obsessed philosophers. If we were to be scientific, it seemed that we must look on human beings as

determined automata, and not as autonomous moral agents; if we were to be moral, it seemed that we must deny science its due, set an arbitrary limit to its progress in understanding human neuro-physiology, and take refuge in obscurantist mysticism. Not even Kant could resolve the tension between the two standpoints. But now, though many arguments against human freedom still remain, the argument from mechanism, perhaps the most compelling argu-ment of them all, has lost its power. No longer on this count will it be incumbent on the natural philosopher to deny freedom in the name of science: no longer will the moralist feel the urge to abolish knowledge to make room for faith. We can even begin to see how there could be room for morality, without its being necessary to abolish or even to circumscribe the province of science. Our argument has set no limits to scientific enquiry: it will still be possible to investigate the working of the brain. It will still be possible to produce mechanical models of the mind. Only, now we can see that no mechanical model will be completely adequate, nor any explanations in purely mechanist terms. We can produce models and explanations, and they will be illuminating: but, however far they go, there will always remain more to be said. There is no arbitrary bound to scientific enquiry: but no scientific enquiry can ever exhaust the infinite variety of the human mind.

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COLOURS

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(I)

In this paper I wish first of all to argue against two possible views about colour qualities, which I shall label the Objectivist and Subjectivist views respectively. I find these views to be prevalent among philosophers of my acquaintance, though sometimes they are hidden by a veneer of post-Wittgensteinian sophistication. Part of my argument will depend on modern scientific theories of colour vision. In the second part of the paper I shall argue for a different view of my own.

According to the Objectivist view a colour, for example redness, is possessed by a thing, say a tomato, quite inherently. That is, it is held that redness does not consist in any relation to human percipients. It is not, as Locke asserted, a power in the object to produce sense-data of a certain sort in normal human beings and in normal conditions of illumination. The Objectivist will of course accept the physical and physiological account of perception, but he will hold that the quality redness, which is inherently possessed by the tomato, is one thing, and that the power the tomato has to produce in us sense-data of a certain sort is another thing, though of course the inherent quality and the power go along together.

Now let me state the Subjectivist view, which I think is Locke's. According to this view the property of redness is not an inherent quality of the tomato, out of all relation to human percipients. On the contrary, the notion of redness is in part an anthropological one: redness is the power something, such as a tomato, has, in virtue of its minute physical constitution, to produce sense-data of a certain sort in normal human beings and in normal conditions of illumination. A sense-datum of a tomato which is seen in normal conditions of illumination by a normal human being has on this view a certain unanalysable inherent quality, or *quale*, whereby it can be distinguished from other sorts of sense-datum. It should be noted that it is the power in the object, not the *quale* of the sense-datum, which Locke calls the "secondary quality" of redness. Unfortunately Berkeley and other later writers have used the expression "secondary quality" to refer not to the power in the external object (indeed for Berkeley there is in a sense no such external object), but to the *quale* of the "idea" or sense-datum.[1]

[1] See the illuminating exegesis of Locke by Reginald Jackson in his article "Locke's Distinction between Primary and Secondary Qualities," *Mind*, Vol. 38, 1929. pp. 56–76.

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Two parallel oddities can be deduced from the Objectivist and Subjectivist theses. Suppose a tomato looks to us the same colour as a post box. Presumably then the tomato has the power to cause similar reactions and internal sensations in us as has the post box. But what right have we to suppose that if there is an intrinsic quality in the tomato which corresponds to this power (and to the minute physical constitution of the surface of the tomato) that it is the same intrinsic quality which corresponds to the power (and to the minute physical constitution) of the surface of the post box?[1] Since we can never be confronted with the intrinsic quality itself, for all we know the intrinsic quality of colour of the tomato may be quite different from that of the post box.[2]

The parallel oddity in the case of the notion of colour as a *quale* of a sense-datum is that we could never be sure that you see the same colours as I do. To use an illustration of John Wisdom's: suppose you see the Union Jack as purple, yellow and green while I see it as red, white and blue. In other words, when you see a proper Union Jack you get the same sense-data as I get when I see a purple, yellow and green Union Jack. Suppose also that the reverse holds, and that you see the purple, yellow and green "Union Jack" as though it were a proper red, white and blue one. The difference between us will be undetectable, because of course I call the thing that produces red sense-data in me "red" but you call the thing which produces purple sense-data in you "red". For example we both understand the traffic lights all right. The actual *qualia* of our sense-data matter not at all so long as there is a one-one mapping of the set of sense-data produced in me on to the set of sense-data produced in you by various stimuli.

The Subjectivist at first sight would appear to be in a stronger position than the Objectivist. For it would seem that even if I am not immediately acquainted with the *qualia* of your sense-data I am immediately acquainted with those of mine. So we can be sure that the *qualia* exist, though we can be sure of nothing further other than the one-one mapping, of which I spoke earlier, between your *qualia* and mine. However, it might be held, without too much heat, that in default of reason to the contrary it is plausible to take the one-one mapping to be by the relation of sameness. That is, you get similar sense-data to those that I get when we both see the Union Jack.

[1] As we shall see later, the remarks in parentheses in this sentence will have to be taken with a good deal of caution, especially if the reader has a one-one correspondence in mind.

[2] Some Objectivists might hold that, by some sort of intuition, we *can* be directly confronted with the inherent qualities of the object. As we shall see, this type of view is scientifically unplausible.

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I have treated the Objectivist as propounding a modification of the Lockean view: he holds that colours are objective *qualia* that go along with Lockean "powers". On this view colours exist objectively but we can never be directly acquainted with them. He might, however, say that what we are directly acquainted with in veridical seeing *is* the objective intrinsic quality of the object. On this view there is an objective intuition which supervenes when the causal process described by physiologists and psychologists occurs.[1] If this is his view, I would suggest that it is scientifically unplausible. It would certainly be incompatible with the view of man as a very complicated physico-chemical mechanism. We might ask just where, and how, such a capacity for intuitions supervenes in the evolutionary history of the human species and of animals. I will however neglect to press this objection, and will content myself with objections to the Objectivist view which will hold even though the Objectivist denies that we can intuit the intrinsic colour *qualia* of objects. The notion of either objective or subjective *qualia* faces sufficiently damaging considerations of another sort.

These considerations turn upon the seeming impossibility of fitting these *qualia*, in any plausible way, into the body of our scientific language. It looks today as though the ultimate laws of nature are those of physics. The laws of chemistry are in principle explicable in terms of the quantum theory of the chemical bond, though to be sure it would be optimistic to carry out such explanations in detail in any but the simplest cases. In biology, I should be prepared to argue, there are no true laws at all. There are generalizations of natural history and explanations of these natural history generalizations in terms of physics and chemistry. (Or sometimes, as in genetics and despite the conception of the gene as a macromolecule, a schematic explanation which is a first stage towards an ultimate biophysical and biochemical one.) By "natural history" I include not only the description of animals, plants and so on, but also of individual cells and parts of individual cells, such as chromosomes. Natural history does not change its logical character by becoming microscopic. In biology natural history stands to physics and chemistry much as in radio engineering the study of wiring diagrams stands to the theory of electricity. (In the case of the schematic type of explanation which has not yet been reduced to a biochemical one, it is as if we had a "block diagram", but not the detailed wiring diagram.)

Now if there are such things as sense-data with special unanalysable *qualia*, then the study of sentient beings does not admit of the above sort of physicalist interpretation. There would have to be special irreducible laws, which were, as H. Feigl puts it, "nomological

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[1] See footnote 3.

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danglers".[1] Such ultimate laws are hard to believe in. As I have argued elsewhere,[2] we expect ultimate laws of nature to relate simple entities. Such, at any rate, has been the whole tendency of science. Even Newtonian dynamics relates to particles in the first place, and is applied to reasonably homogeneous rigid bodies by the mathematical process of integration. The second law of thermodynamics is a macroscopic law but is true in virtue of a statistical averaging out of microscopic goings on. Now an ultimate law which would relate something which is itself perhaps simple, such as a sense-datum, and which has a determinate *quale*, to a very complicated and non-homogeneous process involving millions of neurons (and hence countless millions of millions of ultimate particles), depending on numerous negative feed-back mechanisms of complicated sorts, seems to me to be quite unbelievable. It is so out of harmony with the whole tendency of modern science. I would suspect that a philosophical theory which led me to postulate such very odd "nomological danglers" must have something wrong with it.

In the same way the Objectivist is faced with some very queer ultimate laws. Philosophers often write as if there were a simple one-one correlation between a colour and the corresponding light radiation. But of course in most cases the light emanating from a given object consists of a mixture of many wavelengths, or more accurately, a continuous spread of varying intensity over all or part of the spectrum. If we envisage such a mixture of wavelengths as being represented by a graph, there is an infinite number of such graphs which correspond to a given colour. It is impossible therefore to think of the facts of colour vision as being given by some simple law of correlation between colour and wavelength. Equally, therefore, if there were objective colour *qualia*, the laws of correlation of light reflecting powers of surfaces to *qualia* would be far from simple. If we look further at the nature of colour vision we shall find that it is quite unbelievable that there should be such laws.

The facts of colour vision are extremely complex and are still not well understood. Suppose that we take colours equivalent to those of monochromatic light of wavelengths 700 mμ, 540 mμ and 390 mμ. (Call them R, G and B.) Then by additive mixing of suitable amounts of R, G and B light we can get beams of light which can produce most colour sensations. In particular there is a certain mixture of R, G and B which will produce white light. (I refer the reader to, for example, Chapter 3 of the book *Physical Aspects of Colour* by

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[1] H. Feigl, "The 'Mental' and the 'Physical' ", *Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, Vol. 2, 1958, pp. 370–497, especially pp. 382 and 428.
[2] In my paper "Sensations and Brain Processes", *Philosophical Review*, Vol. 68, pp. 141–56, especially p. 143.

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Dr. P. J. Bouma.[1]) However, there are exceptions. Thus spectral colours between B and G cannot be precisely got by any mixture of B, G and R. However, if you mix a certain proportion of R with this spectral colour you can get a colour which can be got by mixing B and G. Or to put it otherwise (introducing the notion of negative quantities of a colour), we can get the spectral colour in question by mixing certain proportions of B and G with a *negative* proportion of R.

With this added complication, the "three-colour" theory of vision works fairly well, and it has been speculated that there are three different sorts of light-sensitive substance within any cone on the retina, each substance being most sensitive to a different wavelength of light from that to which the other substances are most sensitive. However, even so there are further complications in the facts of colour vision which cannot be explained by the three-colour theory. Suppose that we look at a certain object against a varied background. E. H. Land[2] has argued that if the light coming from this background varies in the intensity of various wavelengths in a fairly random way, then the seen colour of the object depends not so much on the actual wavelengths reflected from it but on the relative distribution of long and short wavelengths over the entire scene. Thus by photographing a scene through two different filters and projecting the two photographs on to a screen simultaneously from two different projectors which have two different filters, we can see colours corresponding to spectral wavelengths which may be even greater or less than the spectral wavelengths which roughly correspond to the colours of the filters. The colours we see probably depend on complicated computations in the brain of the signals from the whole area of the retina, and in such cases cannot be accounted for by the simple mechanism suggested by the three-colour theory.

Land's results thus enormously strengthen the thesis that the colours seen by a normal percipient do not depend on any simple property of the object seen, but that they depend partly on the special peculiarities of the human visual apparatus. This makes very unplausible the Objectivist view that what we see in colour vision corresponds to some intrinsic *quale* of the external object. If the *quale* had been correlated with something simple like a wavelength of emitted or reflected monochromatic light the Objectivist theory would have been a little more plausible. We have seen, however, that the *quale* would have to be correlated with something much more complicated which depends idiosyncratically on the characteristics of the human eye and nervous system. That this should be so is quite as unbelievable as astrology.

[1] Published by Philips Industries, Eindhoven, Netherlands, First Edition, 1949.
[2] E. H. Land, "Experiments in Colour Vision", *Scientific American*, Vol. 200, No. 5 (May 1959), pp. 84–99.

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As we saw, the three-colour theory of vision is not quite satisfactory in so far as (a) we have to bring in negative quantities of colour and (b) it does not account for the surprising facts adduced by E. H. Land. But a strong enough case can be made for the anthropocentricity of our colour concepts if we consider the matter as though the three-colour theory were adequate. The human colour visual apparatus can be simulated by an arrangement of three photo-electric cells connected in such a way that their output currents add up.[1] The three cells must be most sensitive for respectively three different spectral wavelengths, and their maximum sensitivities will in general have to be different from one another. Furthermore the sensitivity of each cell when plotted against wavelength must tail off in accordance with (roughly) a bell-shaped curve, and the exact curves for the various cells will in general have to have rather different shapes. Within limits we can make a fairly arbitrary choice of the wavelengths for which the three cells are most sensitive, but having chosen these we are not free to choose (a) the relative maximum sensitivities of the three cells or (b) the actual shapes of the bell-shaped curves. These must be experimentally determined and depend largely on the characteristics of the normal human eye. It would therefore be an infinitely unlikely coincidence that the resulting current from the three photo-electric cells together should correspond to something objective in the external world, out of any relation to the human visual apparatus or the equivalent photo-electric device. There are good physical reasons why there should be a simple correlation between the expansion of the mercury in a thermometer tube and something objective and non-arbitrary in nature, namely temperature defined thermodynamically. We might indeed say much the same, with due cautions and reservations, of the human sense of hot and cold. We see, however, that what corresponds to the human visual sense, in the way in which the thermometer corresponds to the human heat sense, is a rather arbitrary photo-electric set-up. There are thus good reasons why "colorimetric" measurements should *not* correspond to something simple and objective in nature.

It should now be apparent why anyone acquainted with the scientific facts should regard the Objectivist view of colours as quite unplausible.[2] I should remind the reader that I could have pitched the case even stronger if I had considered the defects of the three-colour theory of vision. Even on the relatively simple three-colour theory the case is quite bad enough for the Objectivist.

[1] See Bouma, op. cit., pp. 154–6.
[2] Different considerations, which point towards a similar conclusion, are given on pp. 302–4 of the Earl of Halsbury's article "Epistemology and Communication Theory". PHILOSOPHY, Vol. 34, 1959. pp. 289–307.

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Furthermore if there are any lingering Objectivists left, I ask them to envisage inhabitants of some other planet for whom a five-colour theory of vision was appropriate. These creatures would have a visual apparatus analogous to a combination of five photo-electric cells. The Objectivist may reply that we with our "three colour" apparatus see in a glass darkly what the extra-terrestrial creature with his "five-colour" apparatus sees better. I then ask him to envisage creatures with "eleven colour" vision, "nineteen colour" vision, and so on until we get to a creature with "infinite colour" vision. This last being would be analogous to a physicist who plots a distribution curve of intensity of the light radiation from a surface against wavelength. Such a being would indeed attain something objective in nature, but not something which is simple or like colours as we know them.

We conclude that the Objectivist theory, like the Subjectivist one, is scientifically quite unplausible. This leads us to search for an account of colours which makes mention neither of objective nor of subjective *qualia*. But before going on to do so it would be as well to bring into the open considerations which make both the Objectivist and Subjectivist views attractive, especially to those who do not bear in mind the scientific facts which make them unplausible.

One consideration seems to be that all the properties that science ascribes to physical objects seem to be purely relational. Thus the length of the table on which I write would seem to consist in its relation to the standard metre bar in Paris, or perhaps to some chosen spectral wavelength. The shape of the table is reducible to various lengths, namely the lengths of a sheaf of lines from a fixed point to points on its circumference. When we pass from tables to sub-microscopic objects the position is no better. Consider an electron. What properties has it? Mass, charge, spin, etc. All these seem to consist in relations to other things. So what on earth is it itself?

A further line of thought was suggested by Berkeley[1] and Hume.[2] Can you imagine something with the primary qualities alone? Can you imagine something with shape without, e.g., filling in the shape with colour? This must presumably be an intrinsic, non-relational *quale*, either of the external object, which leads to the Objectivist view, or of the "idea" or "sense-datum". The latter alternative (the Subjectivist view) leads, *via* the alleged inconceivability of anything with primary qualities alone, to phenomenalism or to Berkeley's near-phenomenalism. This line of thought can be parried, but I pause to note an inconclusive reply to it by G. J. Warnock in his book on Berkeley.[3] Warnock points out that an invisible man, say,

[1] Berkeley, *Principles of Human Knowledge*, §10.
[2] Hume, *Treatise*, Bk. I, Part 4, Sec. 4, "Of the Modern Philosophy".
[3] G. J. Warnock, *Berkeley*, Pelican Books, London, 1953. p. 101.

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is perfectly imaginable. Berkeley and Hume would surely agree that you can indeed imagine an invisible man—for example you might imagine a tray of drinks floating through the air as if carried by an invisible waiter. You can imagine the invisible in that you can imagine queer things happening in the realm of the visible (and the audible, tactual, etc.). This does not prove that you can imagine *everything* without colours or other secondary qualities. (See Hume, *Treatise*, I–4–4.)

My reply to Berkeley and Hume is a different one. Since Wittgenstein we surely know better than to think of a word's having meaning as consisting in its evoking a certain sort of mental image. Meanings are not mental images. No doubt it is impossible to imagine an electron. If we try to do so we perhaps call up the image of a rather fuzzy greyish sphere, and yet we know that it is absurd to ascribe colours or even shapes to electrons. Berkeley's objection fails because the meaning of a word consists in its *use*, not in its associated imagery.[1]

So far, so good. But have we silenced the deeper objection that we have noted earlier? Can a thing have relational properties only? There are three possible answers open to us here. (1) We could explore the possibility of giving a theory of length, mass, etc., as absolute, not relational. (To take account of special relativity we should have to mean by "length", "mass", etc., the rest mass, rest length, etc.) My colleague, Dr. C. B. Martin, is wont to argue that we do indeed test propositions about length relationally, but that to go on to say that length is purely relational is to be unduly verificationist about meaning. (2) We might challenge the principle that all the properties of a thing cannot be relational. (3) We might say that an electron, for example, must have intrinsic qualities, and that its mass, position, etc., are all relational. Our knowledge of the physics and physiology of perception makes it implausible to say that these intrinsic qualities could be perceptible *qualia*. Why, however, should we not say that if an electron has to have intrinsic non-relational properties, then these properties are properties of which we know nothing? ("Properties we know not what", to parody Locke.) In this way our metaphysical principle could be satisfied and no harm done. It is beyond the province of this paper to decide which, if any, of these three suggestions might be the way out of our metaphysical dilemma.

The feeling that there must be intrinsic non-relational properties

[1] Cf. W. Kneale, *Probability and Induction*, Oxford University Press, 1949, p. 94. "Berkeley pointed out quite correctly that the hypothetical entities of the physicists were unimaginable, but he concluded wrongly that because they were unimaginable they were inconceivable." Also R. J. Hirst, *The Problems of Perception*, Allen and Unwin, 1959, p. 167, near bottom.

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of things lends attractiveness to the Objectivist theory of objective colour *qualia*. I have suggested that this attractiveness is not fatal and that it can be resisted. That it *should* be resisted is of course an implication of the considerations I have adduced earlier in this paper. I shall now proceed to give a positive account of colours which eschews *qualia* altogether, whether external or internal. I do not claim any particular originality for it. It is a view which I think is at the back of the minds of many philosophers and psychologists but which I have not seen very explicity stated. This is perhaps because it seems to them trite and obviously true. Unfortunately to other philosophers it appears obviously false, and so it behoves us to state it with some care, so as to avoid the objections of this second class of philosophers.

(2)

It is sometimes said that a blind man cannot know the meanings of words like "red", "green" and "blue". It will appear presently that there is very little truth in this, and that it would be far less misleading to say that a blind man can know the meanings of these words just as well as his sighted brethren can.[1] To understand this is to understand the nub of the following account of colour concepts.

First of all it is necessary to introduce the notion of a *normal human percipient*. I do this indirectly by means of the notion of "being more normal in a certain respect than . . . .". A person A is more normal than B with respect to a certain type of colour discrimination if he can discriminate things with respect to colour that B cannot so discriminate.

This move will at once strike some people as circular, For I am proposing to analyse colour concepts by means of the notion "discriminate with respect to colour". However, there is not really a circularity here, any more than there is in the *Principia Mathematica* definition of number *via* the notion "equinumerous". Just as the notion "equinumerous" can be elucidated with a smaller logical

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[1] P. T. Geach in his excellent and instructive section on "Abstractionism and Colour-Concepts" of his *Mental Acts* (pp. 33–8) points out that a man born blind can show a practical grasp of the logical grammar of colour words (p. 35), and also that he can grasp something of the aesthetic significance of colours in human life (p. 36). He points out important similarities between the blind man's and the sighted man's colour concepts, but I think that we we can go even farther than Geach does in this direction.

The question of a blind man's ability to use colour words is also raised by "B" in the dialogue on pp. 59–62 of J. Hospers' *Introduction to Philosophical Analysis* (Prentice-Hall, New York, 1953). The following pages should indicate how my view differs from "B's" and how it avoids the objections of "A" in the dialogue.

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apparatus than is needed for the concept "number", so can the notion of "discriminate with respect to colour" be analysed with less conceptual apparatus than is needed for the full concept of colour.

Suppose that one man can separate different pieces of wool out into various bundles, and repeating the process after the pieces of wool have been shuffled will once more separate them out into the same bundles. (We may suppose that each piece of wool is tagged in some way known to us but unknown to the subjects of our experiment, so that we can keep track of it throughout the experiment.) Suppose, furthermore, that another man cannot consistently in this manner separate out the pieces of wool into bundles. The pieces of wool are quite similar in length, thickness and texture, and they also reflect similar amounts of light. (The difference between them is not that of *bright* and *dark*.) The superior ability of the one man to discriminate clearly depends on something else. Moreover, such discriminations cannot be made by touch, taste or other non-visual sense. Furthermore, this ability to discriminate is impaired by changes in the illumination. These discriminations cannot be made at dusk or in moonlight, for example. Or, again, perhaps they cannot be made when the object is illuminated by sodium light. Furthermore, the ability may be impaired by the wearing of certain sorts of spectacles, which nevertheless do not impair the ability to discriminate shape, size and texture. (Perhaps these are *blue* spectacles, but this need not enter into the analysis.)

It would be tedious to go on in more detail, but it should be clear from the foregoing paragraph that with ingenuity we can elucidate the complex expression "discriminate with respect to colour", as it occurs in any context, without making use of colour words or of the general word "colour" itself.

We now define "a normal percipient". A normal percipient is one who is at least as normal in respect of any colour discriminations as is any other percipient. Thus if A can make discriminations with respect to colour that B cannot make then B is not a normal percipient. It may well be of course that there are not in fact any normal percipients. For A may make better discriminations than anyone else at the red end of the spectrum and B may make better discriminations than anyone else at the blue end of the spectrum. In this case a normal percipient would be an imaginary person who combines the abilities of both A and B. (Or, if you prefer, the notion could be realized by a syndicate consisting of A and B acting in concert.) However, this is an unimportant subtlety. Within a small margin, at any rate, there are in fact millions of normal percipients.

If we have a child who we have some reason to believe is a normal percipient, we can set about teaching him words like "red", "green",

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"blue", by teaching him to respond with the word "red" when he is confronted with, for example, tomatoes, geraniums, and British post boxes, "green" when he is confronted with grass, cabbages and Australian cricket caps, "blue" when he is confronted with forget-me-nots, delphiniums, and Oxford or Cambridge oars. Of course usually more familiar but less well known objects than some of these are chosen. Different pupils learn colour words by being confronted with different sorts of things. The point is, however, that in learning colour words, if we are normal percipients, we are taught to make various discriminations[1] and to couple the verbal reactions of saying "red", "green", "blue", etc., in a determinate way with these discriminatory reactions. Thus "green" will be applied to all things of a set which are hard to distinguish from one another with respect to colour, whereas the things we call "blue" and "yellow" are in general easier to distinguish from members of this set with respect to colour, that is, they can be distinguished in relatively unfavourable conditions. Of course there will be some things which are as hard to distinguish from some green things as they are to distinguish from some yellow things: these we may call "greenish yellow".

What about the difference between Oxford blue and Cambridge blue? We call things of both these colours "blue". They are, however, from the present point of view, different colours, in that a normal percipient will easily distinguish otherwise similar objects, one of which is Oxford blue and the other Cambridge blue. When we become more scientific we can make further distinctions and say that Oxford and Cambridge blue are of the same hue but different saturations. (You can turn an Oxford blue light source into a Cambridge blue one by mixing in white light.)

Now consider two similar objects, such as rowing oars, one of which is one colour (Oxford blue or green, perhaps) and the other a different colour (Cambridge blue or red, perhaps). You may object to my analysis of colours in terms of discriminatory reactions by saying that a man who distinguishes the one object from the other does so *because he sees that they are different colours*. Have I not, therefore, put the cart before the horse? I deny this. The clause "because he sees that they are different colours" does indeed have a function: it denies that the man distinguishes the two things on account of shape or texture, for example, and asserts that his discrimination is a discrimination with respect to colour. We have seen, however, that "discriminate with respect to colour" can be elucidated without bringing in the notion of colour.

I do not wish to deny, of course, that a man who sees a Cambridge

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[1] That is, if it is necessary. May be, like some animals, we can make some such discriminations anterior to learning language at all. Whether this is so or not is a question for the psychologists.

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blue oar has a different sort of visual experience from that had by a man who sees an Oxford blue oar. (In another place I defend the view that visual experiences are in fact brain processes.[1]) My point is that the visual experiences themselves matter not at all; provided that the discriminatory reactions are right the experiences can be what they please. So even if visual experiences possessed certain unanalysable *qualia*, these *qualia* would be quite irrelevant to the matter in hand. I do however also deny that reports of immediate experiences refer to immediate *qualia* of these experiences. My view is roughly as follows. Suppose that a person reports the having of a yellow sense-datum or image. What he is saying is to the effect that something is going on in him which is like what goes on in him when he is a normal percipient, he is in normal conditions, and his eyes are open, and he is confronted with a yellow object, such as a lemon.[2] (In the previous sentence I use the word "like" in such a sense that it is correct to say not only that one twin is like his brother but also like himself.) A report of an experience is thus a very open or general proposition: it is like "somebody spoke to me" rather than "my wife spoke to me". We might be tempted, rather like the White King in *Alice through the Looking Glass*, to think of "somebody" as a very elusive and ghostly entity, unlike that flesh and blood and colourful entity my wife.[3] This helps to explain the elusiveness of the alleged *qualia* of internal experiences or "raw feels".[4]

In the earlier article to which I referred,[5] I suggest that "this is red" means *roughly* that a normal human percipient would not easily pick this out of a heap of geranium petals though he would easily pick it out of a heap of lettuce leaves. Of course this is in a

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[1] The article, "Sensations and Brain Processes", already cited. This owes much to U. T. Place's earlier and excellent paper, "Is Consciousness a Brain Process?" *British Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 47, 1956, pp. 44–50.

[2] What may be the same view as mine is suggested by D. O. Hebb's *Textbook of Psychology*, Saunders, Philadelphia and London, 1958, p. 187, where Hebb is discussing the phi-phenomenon. Hebb says: "What does it mean when a subject reports that he sees a light move . . . it means, simply, that these conditions of stimulation produce, at some level in the brain, the same process that is produced by a light that does move from A to B." I should myself, of course, be cautious about mentioning the brain in translating remarks of the "it seems to me as if . . ." sort, since these can be understood by those who are ignorant of the brain's physiological function. But no doubt we should also be cautious in interpreting the word "means" in the quotation from Hebb. Hebb's further remarks in this place are instructive: he points out that though the phi-phenomenon appears to be a continuous process, the cortical process need not be, and probably is not, a continuous movement of excitation from one point to another.

[3] In the White King's case it was the word "nobody" that deceived him.

[4] On this point see the article "Sensations and Brain Processes", p. 150.

[5] See footnote [2] on page 131.

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way wrong and I must qualify it. For one thing a person normally learns the word "red" before he even learns the words "geranium" and "lettuce", not to mention "normal percipient". Nevertheless, we can imagine definitions of this sort given to a tribe of people who had grown up knowing English but without ever having been introduced to colour vocabulary. These definitions would in fact lead them to use colour words much as we, who have learned them ostensively, do use them. Indeed, it does not seem unnatural to regard such a phrase as "the colour of tomatoes" as a definition of "red". (Something very similar is to be found in the *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*.) It is indeed not an explicit definition or translation, but it is a perfectly good instruction for someone who knows the word "colour", but, for some queer reason, not the word "red". It is only one step further to imagine people, for example blind people, who introduce the notion of colour by means of the abilities to discriminate of normal percipients.

Imagine a race of congenitally blind people who have as slaves a race of normal percipients. There is a system of taboo whereby the slaves must never use colour words, so that they never themselves utter them nor understand them if uttered by others. The blind people cut up wool into hundreds of pieces and dip different bits of wool into various dyes. (One dye to each bit of wool but many bits of wool to each dye.) They then do experiments on the slaves and discover their discrimination patterns with respect to the bits of wool. We can suppose each piece of wool to be tagged in some way unknown to the slaves, and that the slaves assort the pieces of wool into various heaps, the pieces are then shuffled up together again, and it is found that when the pieces of wool are sorted out by the slaves again the same pieces as before go into the same heaps. The slaves can distinguish bits of wool from different heaps but not bits of wool from the same heap. More refined experiments giving the slaves more time, better light, etc., would of course lead not to a small set of heaps but to a very large number of heaps giving the idea of a colour continum: the blind men would say that the colour of bit of wool B is between the colours of bits of wool A and C, if a slave can distinguish A from C, but not A from B or B from C.

The blind rulers could invent words "α" "β" "γ" for the colours for various classes of pieces of wool not easily distinguished from one another. They then find that α wool is not easily picked out by a slave when it is dropped into a bowl of tomatoes, and β wool is not easily picked out by a slave when it is dropped into a bowl of lemons. They assign the word "red" to α wool, "yellow" to β wool, and so on. Further details can be left to the reader. Such a tribe of blind people could come to use the words "red", "yellow" and so on very much in the way we do. But they would not have learned

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the words ostensively, nor would they have learned them from people who had themselves learned them ostensively. (Remember that the slaves have no colour vocabulary.)

Now would these blind rulers use colour words in the same way that we do? It is surely *at least* as misleading to say "no" in answer to this question as it is to say "yes". Admittedly the blind rulers do not react spontaneously with "red" when they are confronted with a tomato, for of course they cannot see the tomato. Nevertheless the objective criteria for the redness of an object are exactly the same with them as with us. These objective criteria are the discriminatory responses of normal percipients. As against the common view that colour words are meaningless to the congenitally blind I would rather say, therefore, that the congenitally blind can understand the meanings of colour words every bit as well as sighted people can. The congenitally blind man cannot, and never could, use himself as one of the normal percipients (or "colour meters", one might say) but has to use someone else. This is only to say that the blind man is not a normal percipient, which is trivial. The idea that a congenitally blind man cannot understand colour words is connected, I suspect, with a pre-Wittgensteinian view of meaning not as "use" but as a mental experience which evokes and and is evoked by a word.

We saw earlier that the human visual mechanism behaves rather like an arrangement of three photo-electric cells, though with additional complications. It does not need too much ingenuity to think of some other arrangement of photo-electric cells (call it "Q" and call the first mentioned arrangement "P") with the following property. P distinguishes mixtures of light waves that Q does not distinguish and Q distinguishes mixtures that P does not distinguish. May be there are extra-terrestrial beings who are like Q. This illustrates my contention that colour concepts correspond to the distinctions made by a rather complex neuro-physiological mechanism and do not correspond to anything simple in nature. This accounts for the often remarked causal inefficacy of colours. We should not expect to find simple laws relating to colours, except when the mixtures of light concerned are fairly simply related to pure spectral wavelengths. (For example, it is indeed useful to talk of "red" and "blue" stars, for in this case the stars send out mostly long-waved and short-waved light respectively. We must remember that this sort of situation does not necessarily obtain. We can get a perfectly good colour by, say, mixing arbitrary proportions of five arbitrarily chosen wavelengths, or even in more idiosyncratic ways.) Boyle in his *Origins of Forms and Qualities* (1666)[1] most instructively compares

[1] If this work is not readily obtainable see the quotations from it in Reginald Jackson's article (cited in footnote 1 on page 128).

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the secondary qualities to the power of a key to turn a lock. This clearly depends just as much on the lock as on the key, and we cannot expect such powers to correspond to anything simple in nature. Moreover, we can well imagine a complicated lock such that keys of various different and queer shapes fit it, and there is no correlation between similarity in shapes of the keys and similarity of their lock turning powers.

I conclude therefore that colour is an anthropocentric concept. Extra-terrestrial beings could be expected to have a similar concept of length or electric charge to ours, but we would not expect their colour concepts, supposing they had any, to correspond to ours in any simple manner. If our philosophical task is, in part, to see the world *sub specie aeternitatis*, to see the world as through the linguistic medium of a possible "cosmic language",[1] then we must eschew colour concepts.

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[1] See Hans Freudenthal "Towards a Cosmic Language", *Delta* (Netherlands), Summer, 1958, pp. 37–48.

HÄGERSTRÖM'S PHILOSOPHY OF LAW

JOHN PASSMORE

IN what it will be convenient to call "the Scandinavian school" of jurisprudence, Hägerström is clearly the master. But his leadership is of a somewhat special kind. For all that he wrote a large book on Roman law,[1] Hägerström was trained as, and continued to be, a philosopher, not a jurisprudentialist or a sociologist. His essays on law and morals are ancillary to his main purpose: to destroy transcendental metaphysics. The epigraph he chose to head his contribution to *Die Philosophie der Gegenwart in Selbstdarstellungen*[2] was uncompromising: "Praeterea censeo metaphysicam esse delendam." If, in his published work, he to so considerable a degree concentrated his attention on ethics and jurisprudence, that is because he took them to be a particularly rich source of metaphysical mystery-mongering. Through a study of men's moral and legal ideas, Hägerström thought he could bring out the sources, the defects— and even, in a way, the strength—of metaphysical thinking.[3]

Except for his incursion into Roman law, Hägerström has little to say about detailed questions of legal theory.[4] But his attack on metaphysics won him many converts, three of whom were to occupy Chairs of Law (Hägerström's own Chair was in Philosophy): in Sweden, Lundstedt and Olivecrona, in Denmark Ross. What is often a mere sketch in Hägerström is in their writings filled out; to see the full force of his legal philosophy one must turn to A. C. Lundstedt's *Legal Thinking Revised* (1956), K. Olivecrona's *Law as Fact* (1939), Alf Ross's *Towards a Realistic Jurisprudence* (1946).[5] Yet the reverse also holds. No one of these latter books is wholly self-contained. To understand them, or effectively to criticize them, one must

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[1] *Der römische Obligationsbegriff im Lichte der allgemeinen römischen Rechtsanschauung* (Vol. I, 1927; Vol. II, 1941).

[2] Vol. 7, 1929, pp. 111–59.

[3] He applied his general ideas to physical science, however, in his *Das Prinzip der Wissenschaft* (1908).

[4] The essay which relates most closely to a specific point in law is his *The Conception of a Declaration of Intention in the Sphere of Private Law*, which was first published, in Swedish, in 1935, and is reprinted as the fifth essay in Hägerström's *Inquiries into the Nature of Laws and Morals* (ed. K. Olivecrona, trans. C. D. Broad, 1953). Unless the contrary is indicated, my page references to Hägerström are to this volume.

[5] Mentioned in this particular order, because Olivecrona was actually a pupil of Lundstedt's. Ross, however, refers in his book only to Hägerström, not to Lundstedt or Olivecrona. I have made little use of Lundstedt's book, partly because it is written in a variety of English so peculiar as to be almost entirely unintelligible.

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constantly return to Hägerström; they presume the substantial truth of his subtle and detailed philosophical analyses.[1] For this reason, the doctrine of the Scandinavian school has rather to be *constructed* than *found*; if the present essay is mainly devoted to Hägerström, it at the same time, and inevitably, interprets Hägerström through the writing of his disciples—in spite of the obvious dangers in that method of interpretation.

Like most Continental philosophers of his generation—he was born in 1863 and died in 1939—Hägerström began from Kant; his study of Kant led him away from his first love, theology, and into philosophy. He soon developed Kant's theories in an anti-metaphysical direction.[2] In particular, he abandoned Kant's distinction between the empirical self—the self of everyday life and of psychology—and that "transcendental" self the existence of which, according to Kant, is presupposed in our moral thinking. Kant was right, Hägerström continued to believe, in maintaining that moral rules present themselves to us as absolute, or categorical, imperatives, which we feel we *must* obey; his mistake lay in his supposing that any metaphysical consequences flow from this fact.

Kant was driven into his "metaphysics of morals" because he saw the inconsistencies in everyday moral thinking, according to which moral rules and moral action belong to the ordinary empirical world, and yet have a queer sort of supernatural or transcendental status. If moral rules are to function as absolute imperatives, not just as convenient principles of conduct, then, Kant maintains, they must issue from a transcendental, self-governing self; and moral action if, as is commonly supposed, it is wholly free must proceed from that same self. For every action of the everyday, empirical, self is empirically conditioned. Thus neither moral rules nor moral action can be merely natural facts.

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[1] Thus Jerome Hall's recent criticism of the Scandinavian school in his "Reason and Reality in Jurisprudence" (*Buffalo Law Review*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1958, pp. 372–80) misses its target, just because he has failed to refer back beyond Ross, his principal source, to Hägerström. Thus, when criticizing Ross, Hall writes that "if disinterested attitudes are wholly factual, there still remains the problem of getting from that existential datum to the realm or 'illusion' of validity" (p. 376), Ross would certainly reply that this problem had already been solved by Hägerström.

[2] So far he belonged to the general neo-Kantian movement of his times. He does not explicitly refer to such fellow neo-Kantians as Lange, but he must have felt their influence—and, either independently or through their writings, the influence of British empiricism. The fact remains that the ambit of his thinking is German; British readers may sometimes wonder what the fuss is about because, with their utilitarian tradition, they have rarely taken seriously the distinction between the "normative" and the "factual"—the realm of values and the realm of facts—which runs through so much German ethical and legal philosophy.

HÄGERSTRÖM'S PHILOSOPHY OF LAW

The dualism Kant perceived in uncritical moral thinking is paralleled, Hägerström thought, by a dualism within our conceptions of the law. "Law", writes Ross, "is conceived at the same time as an observable phenomenon in the world of facts, and as a binding norm in the world of morals and rules, at the same time as physical and metaphysical, as empirical and *a priori*, as real and ideal, as something that exists and something that is valid" (p. 11). Confronted with this dualism, and conscious of the inconsistencies it involves, we may be tempted, like Kant, to construct a metaphysical theory as a way of overcoming these inconsistencies.

This step was taken by Kelsen, whose *Allgemeine Staatslehre* (1925), Hägerström reviewed at length.[1] In his efforts to achieve consistency Kelsen so metaphysicalizes law that he is quite unable to connect it—except by an arbitrary *fiat*—with everyday legislative and judicial procedures. The world of legal norms, according to Kelsen, is something quite other than the ordinary world of causal relationships: law knows nothing of what *actually* produces what, but only of what *ought to* produce what. But how can we possibly give an account of such a phenomenon as punishment, Hägerström asks, except in terms of our experience of causal relationships? More generally, does not causality enter into all our conceptions of legal transactions?

Of legislation, Kelsen wrote: "That which takes place in the act of legislation is the great *mystery* of law and of the state, and therefore it is excusable that its essence can be displayed only in inadequate images."[2] Legislation, Kelsen admits, is part of the natural order, and yet it is at the same time the only medium through which the order of norms can reveal itself; the "mystery" lies in its being able to belong to both worlds at once. "One is inevitably reminded", comments Hägerström, "of a mediaeval thinker who discusses the great mystery of the God-man!" (p. 268). When we look clearly at actual legislative processes we see no "mystery", but something quite prosaic, wholly natural: to turn these prosaic processes into a "great mystery" is to pervert the facts in the interest of metaphysical presumptions. "The law", Olivecrona sums up in his criticism of Kelsen, "is a link in the chain of cause and effect. It has therefore a place among the facts of time and space. But then it cannot at the same time belong to another world. The law cannot on the one hand be a fact (which it undoubtedly is) and on the other hand, something outside the chain of cause and effects" (p. 17).

[1] This review is translated as essay IV (pp. 257–298) in *Inquiries*. With much of Kelsen's work—and in particular his criticisms of Austin—Hägerström is in very great sympathy. He parts company with him, however, as soon as Kelsen embarks upon metaphysics.

[2] *Hauptprobleme der Staatsrechtslehre* (1911), p. 105, as translated by Broad in Hägerström's *Inquiries*, p. 268.

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Dissatisfied, for this sort of reason, with attempts to overthrow the dualism of traditional legal theory by insisting upon the meta-physical nature of law, one may be tempted to turn in the opposite direction: concluding that to talk of "the absolute validity", or "the bindingness", or "the normative character", of law is just an obscure way of referring to certain social facts which can be specified in detail. Roughly speaking, this is the path taken by the American realists. But, Hägerström objects, there are no social facts the existence of which is strictly equivalent to the "bindingness" of the law. Such facts as "I shall be punished, if I do not do this", "so-and-so commands me to do this", "the judges have decided that people caught acting in this way will be punished" are not, severally or collectively, equivalent to asserting that the law in question has a binding force, or is "valid". Ross puts the point thus: "The aim of a realistic criticism cannot merely be to spirit away the notions of validity. Such a method, which at present has champions in American 'realistic' jurisprudence, does not lead to the goal. It is true that it avoids dualism, but it does not conquer it. It is incapable of delimit-ing the legal phenomenon from other social behaviour" (p. 13). To say that "all we really mean" by asserting that the law is binding on us is that, for example, we run the risk of being punished if we disobey it does not do justice to the way the concept of "bindingness" actually functions in our thinking.

So we seem to be in a dilemma. Everyday conceptions of law are wholly inconsistent; they cannot stand up to the criticisms of, on the one side, Kelsen, or, on the other side, the realists. Yet as soon as we try, in search of greater consistency, to identify law either with metaphysical norms or with a set of social facts, everything seems to go wrong: we are at once aware that we have left something out, something which ordinary legal doctrines, however confusedly, had recognized—that law is *both* a social fact and yet is, in some special sense, taken to be absolutely "binding". The problem, then, is to work out a philosophy of law which avoids inconsistency but does not falsify the facts. "The way out", to quote Ross again, "is not to evade dualism by choosing one of its components but to conquer dualism by showing that, rightly interpreted, it is not an expression of opposite and irreconcilable points of view, but symbolizes different, actual, elements of the legal phenomenon" (p. 13).

This way out, it might be replied, had already been taken—by Austin and his followers. For if law is the command of a sovereign whose will we habitually obey, then, first, the existence of a law is a natural, non-metaphysical fact—the law p exists if and only if a sovereign has commanded p—and, secondly, one can understand why laws are felt to be absolutely binding: they are commanded by

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somebody to whom we *habitually* offer obedience, somebody we obey, that is, without any calculation of consequences.

It is not surprising, then, that Hägerström writes as if legal positivism were the only plausible alternative to his own philosophy of law; he devotes to a criticism of it most of the essays collected in his *Inquiries into the Nature of Law and Morals*. His argument takes the form of a dilemma. Literally interpreted, he tries to show, legal positivism is wholly implausible; interpreted in any other way, it collapses into metaphysics.

Suppose, to take the most general form of the positivist theory, law is defined as "the will of the state". What, then, is "the will of the state"? To this question, Hägerström argues, there are three possible answers, none of them at all satisfactory:

(1) The "will of the state" is nothing more than the rules of law which hold good in the state. "When it is said that the law contains the will of the state", Kelsen wrote in his *Hauptprobleme der Staatsrechtslehre*, "this merely means that the law determines the actual circumstances that are to be deemed the actions of the state, those which the state wills" (p. 183). But then it is merely tautologous to say that "rules of law are the will of the state"; this amounts to the quite empty assertion that "rules of law are the rules laid down as law". If this is all that is meant, one should abandon misleading talk about "the will of the state" and consider, simply, the way legal rules function within the state mechanism.

(2) To avoid this emptiness, "the will of the state" may be identified with "the general will". Suppose we now try to interpret this expression "the general will" concretely, positively. Then it can only mean, Hägerström argues, "what everybody wills". But it is not true of *any* law that *everybody* wants it; the citizens of a state, indeed, ordinarily know nothing of most of the laws to which they are subject—and they can scarcely be held to "will" laws of which they are wholly ignorant. So, Hägerström concludes, the "general will" cannot be concretely interpreted; it has to be regarded as a queer sort of metaphysical entity, which in behaviour and characteristics bears no resemblance to what we ordinarily describe as "willing" and which is related to ordinary legislative processes in a quite unintelligible way.

(3) In the hope of being at once informative and non-metaphysical, the positivist may contend that "the will of the state" is an elliptical way of referring to the commands of certain quite specific persons. Those persons are variously identified: sometimes as the sovereign ruler, sometimes as the legislator, sometimes as the judge. Seeking an answer to the question: "Who commands the law?", positivists have fixed the responsibility now at this point, now at that point, in the legal mechanism. But each resting-point, Hägerström argues,

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has the same defect: the alleged "commander" is himself bound by legal rules; and indeed his ability to affect the course of the law depends precisely on that fact. So law cannot be defined as "what the commander commands".

Some persons, Hägerström willingly admits, are favourably placed in that "network of positions of power" which constitutes the state. As members of the Cabinet, for example, they may help to determine the sort of proposal which is put before the legislature, and thus, in the long run, they may influence the conduct of judges, policemen, and citizens. The fact remains that the law is by no means identical with what such persons will to be the case; indeed, the very effectiveness of their action depends upon the existence of laws which they did nothing to create—laws which guarantee to them, under specific conditions, the exercise of a certain kind of power.

The most that could properly be meant by the assertion that "the law is the will of the state", Hägerström concludes, is that laws are brought forward and supported by the very same forces which sustain the state. But even then, he thinks, the language of "wills" is objectionable, for it suggests that the heterogeneous forces which sustain the state are each of them a form of will, and this is simply not the case. "Suppose we inquire", Hägerström writes, "as to the force which commonly keeps in existence an already existing law. The answer is a medley of all kinds of heterogeneous factors. They include the popular feeling of justice, class-interests, the general inclination to adapt oneself to circumstances, fear of anarchy, lack of organization among the discontented part of the people, and by no means least the inherited custom of observing what is called the law of the land" (p. 39). To construct a "voluntary will" out of such a conglomeration of forces, he concludes, is to indulge in an egregious version of anthropomorphic metaphysics.

Similar considerations apply, Hägerström suggests, to those other circumstances in which it is customary to invoke the phrase "the will of the state". Suppose we are asked why the judge in a particular case applies customary law or "the spirit of the law" *praeter* or *contra legem*. We might reply that in such cases the judge expresses "the real will of the state". But what evidence can there be that this is so—that the judge's decision rather than the relevant legislation expresses "the real will"? In fact, once more, all sorts of considerations influence the judge's decision: his notions of justice, his fear of popular disapproval, his interest in bringing about, or preventing, certain kinds of social change—perhaps, even, his conviction, however ill-founded, that it is his task to express the real will of the state. To amalgamate this set of influences into a single mythical entity—"the real will"—is at once to be landed in metaphysics;

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instead of undertaking a genuine, positive, inquiry into the forces which influence the conduct of judges the "real will" theorist stops inquiry with an empty gesture.

An even more fundamental objection to legal positivism, Hägerström argues, is that it is a serious error, even if a very natural one, to assimilate laws to commands. To make this point, Hägerström embarks upon a complex and a detailed investigation into the related notions of a command, an admonition, a threat, a duty, a right.

A "command" he defines as an attempt, commonly making use of words, on the part of one person (the commander) to cause another person (the commanded) to act or not to act in a particular way, without offering him any inducement to do so or, more generally, without putting before him any reason for so acting. If inducements are offered, this is a promise or a threat, not a command; if attention is drawn to the value of the act in question, this is advice or admonition. "Shut the door" is a command; "shut the door or I will tell your mother" is a threat; "you will find that if you shut the door, it will be easier for you to work" is a piece of advice; "you ought to develop the habit of shutting the door" is an admonition.

A command, he argues, is not equivalent to a judgment, e.g. to a statement of volition. "I want you to go" invites the question "But why?", whereas a command is an attempt to damp down questions or objections. It seeks to create an immediate association "between a feeling of conative impulse and the idea of a certain action" (p. 120) —without any pause for reflection, or hesitation, or doubt. It works successfully only when there exists a special relationship between commander and commanded in the form of a feeling of inferiority, however engendered, which creates in the person commanded a susceptibility to the commands issuing from the being he accepts as his superior.

That the sense of duty is somehow related to the feeling of being commanded is strongly suggested, according to Hägerström, by the history of ethical theory: ethical theorists have repeatedly argued that doing one's duty consists in obeying commands—whether the commands of God, or of the sovereign, or of conscience, or of one's own will. We experience an inner necessitation, Hägerström agrees with Kant, which drives us to perform our duty; and this is by no means identical with the feeling which arises when we act in a certain way in order to avoid unpleasant consequences, or because we believe it is the way of acting which is most likely to conserve, or produce, or exemplify, what we value. We feel *impelled* to do our duty, irrespective of our independent valuation of the act in question. To this extent, Hägerström admits, there is a great resemblance between the state of consciousness experienced by the recipient of a

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command and the state of consciousness experienced by a person who is influenced by a sense of duty: each experiences a direct conative impulse to act in a particular way.[1]

At the same time, Hägerström considers, there is an important difference between the two cases. A pure command—"Shut the door!"—cannot possibly be expressed as a judgment. On the other hand, this is the natural mode in which to formulate a conviction of duty: we say "This action *is* my duty", or "I *am* under an obligation to act in this way", where, on the face of it, we are ascribing to the action in question certain objective properties, the property of "being our duty" or "being obligatory". Yet if we go in search of such a property, Hägerström argues, we cannot find it; indeed, to assert of something that it "ought-to-be" cannot be identical with asserting that it in fact possesses such-and-such properties.

Hägerström's conclusion is that the indicative statement: "This action is my duty" is a reflex expression of the conative impulse to perform the action in question; so far, it is comparable with an interjection. The statement does not of course *assert that* I am experiencing such-and-such an impulse; it merely *expresses* this impulse. The impulse expresses itself as an ingredient in a judgment, Hägerström suggests, because the cognitive side—the contemplation of the act in question—is so prominent in our consciousness that our impulse seeks to be represented within it. (Compare "What a cheerful scene!", "That book is interesting", "How disgusting to eat snails!", etc.) Since our impulses to act are not merely personal to us—they are common to members of the same social and linguistic group— the expressions to which they give rise come to have all the formal characteristics of genuinely descriptive expressions. I can ask myself, for example, what is implied by the fact that it is my duty to nominate examiners. Thus we can easily believe that such expressions refer to actual properties of acts.

The crucial point, for Hägerström, is that when we take an act to be our duty we believe that it is *objectively* our duty, quite irrespective of the fact that someone has commanded it. No doubt, we may consider it our duty to obey a particular commander; but this, we believe, is not because we are commanded to obey him but because it is objectively our duty to do so. If we inquire into the origins of this belief, to the way in which our inner necessitation arises, we shall certainly find, Hägerström thinks, that in our early years we were commanded by parents, friends, teachers—their commands to a large degree converging—to act in the way we now take to be obligatory; we shall find, too, that we first met with certain of these courses of action as the customs of our community, which we took

[1] Compare C. D. Broad: "Hägerström's Account of Sense of Duty and Certain Allied Experiences" (*Philosophy*, Vol. XVI, No. 97, pp. 99–113).

over in the course of our education. But we do not regard an act as "our duty" until we have shaken it loose from any reference to particular commanders, or to particular customs: until we believe, that is, that the situation which confronts us objectively "calls for" certain action on our part, whatever other people may think about it.

We come to regard an action, in other words, as being *commanded by its very nature*, as distinct from being *commanded by so-and-so*. And with a belief that the action is quite objectively demanded of us is associated the belief that this demand applies to everybody in our position; so that we feel moral indignation when other people fail to react appropriately. We develop a "sense of justice", which demands reparation when men fail to perform "their duty"—even when their failure has no direct effect on our interests.

This transmutation of commands, and of customs, into what Olivecrona calls "independent imperatives" is of immense social importance. So long as a system of government is thought of as working solely with commands, its subjects are always liable to feel that these commands may turn out to be merely whims. But if the law is thought of as objectively binding then the situation changes: the compulsion associated with it is now a righteous compulsion, and the law operates as effectively in the absence of its administrators as in their presence. It is true that the development of such a "moral sense" on the part of their subjects may in some respects limit the activities of the governing groups. They can no longer act in a quite arbitrary way, unless they are prepared to run the risk of stirring up powerful moral feelings. In general terms, all the same, the existence of these feelings helps to make more secure the position of the state. And if a certain consciousness persists that "objective norms" have some resemblance to commands, this can be met by describing them as flowing from "the will of God" or from "the real will of the state".

Let us now consider the implications of this general theory of duty for the philosophy of law. In the first place, a law is not a command: a command is addressed by a particular person to a particular person, and laws fulfil neither of these conditions. If a policeman says to me: "Keep off the grass", this is a command; if he utters these words when nobody is present he is *not* commanding—although he may be practising how to command. In contrast, a notice reading "Keep off the grass" does not cease to have legal force merely because nobody reads it; nor is its force affected by the fact that no clear answer can be given to the question "Who says so?" Even if the notice adds: "By order: the Town Clerk", it would be absurd to say that the Town Clerk commands us to keep off the grass. Most likely, he does not even know that the notice exists; and if there were for the time being no Town Clerk, the notice would still be legally effective.

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Equally, laws are not statements. Nobody could insist more strongly than Hägerström that laws are imperative in their intention. They do not tell us that we *must* do this or that, but they do tell us what line of conduct we are to adopt if certain circumstances arise: they tell judges how they are to behave in the event that a murderer is found guilty in a court over which they are presiding, they tell policemen how to proceed if they suspect somebody of having committed a burglary, they tell any of us that if we buy a car we are to register it, that if we wish to enter into a contract which will be enforceable at law we must go through such-and-such procedures, that if we wish to leave money to a university such-and-such forms are to be observed. We can express these facts generally, as Olive-crona does, by saying that laws put before us "patterns of conduct".

But, of course, any preacher or poet might put before us patterns of conduct. What constitutes the peculiar effectiveness of the patterns promulgated in laws, we might ask, if not that we are commanded to adhere to them? Their effectiveness, Hägerström would reply, derives from the fact that they have a certain kind of backing; they are supported by force—by executive action. An act is illegal if, and only if, it is liable to punishment; a contract is legally binding if, and only if, the penalties attached to it would be enforced by the court.[1] Popular thinking reverses the true order of dependence in speaking as if an act is liable to punishment because it is illegal: in fact, the illegality of an act simply consists in its liability to punishment. Illegality, so Hägerström sums up, is "the behaviour, whether it be omission or positive action, which calls forth a certain reaction in accordance with the rules for coercion which are *in general* applied and irresistibly carried out as a matter of fact in a human community" (p. 348).

The capacity of the law to coerce is not sustained by, just as it does not express, a will or set of wills. It presupposes, in the first place, what Hägerström calls "social instinct"—the fact that "in a certain community the members are inclined, *in general independently of all reflection*, to follow certain rules of action, whereby co-operation at least for maintenance of life and propagation within the group becomes possible" (p. 350). In particular, the effectiveness of a legal system presupposes that this instinct should be attached to rules of law. Then the man who contemplates illegal action is checked by

[1] Confusion may be caused by the use of the phrase "legally binding" in relation to contracts. To say they are legally binding is different from saying that the law to which they conform is binding upon us. We could, in principle, admit that the contract is a binding one, i.e. is good in law, and yet reject the claims of the law to bind us. The question "does this conform to law?" is a different question from "shall I obey the law?" The second sort of "legal bindingness" is the sort which cannot be reduced to susceptibility to penalty; the first sort can be.

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his awareness of the effect that the illegality of his action will have in arousing the moral disapproval of others; he is checked, too, by his own internal reaction to the performance of illegal actions. But as well, he knows that his fellow-citizens will regard themselves as possessing certain "rights" which may induce them to set in operation the legal machinery against him. Thus to the influence of his own moral feelings and the moral pressure of the community is added a fear of punishment.

Another important factor, particularly at certain stages in the development of legal systems, lies in the association of legal power with supposed supernatural forces. Hägerström's studies in Roman Law were directed towards revealing the magical elements which are concealed within that Law.[1] These magical elements persist, he believes, within modern systems of law, but he has less to say about their operation there. One can see clearly enough, however, the magical significance of oath-taking, of donning a black cap, of the archaic and arcane formulae in which legal rules are commonly expressed—to say nothing of the bringing of laws into association with a sovereign ruler who has himself been subjected to the magical ceremony of coronation. These various social, moral, religious forces—not a will, or collection of wills—sustain the legal system. "The legal order", he contends, "whose very existence as a power simply reduces to the fact that certain coercive rules are actually maintained through the positive attitude of the subjects towards them, cannot be a power which stands *above* its subjects and imperiously issues commands to them" (p. 360).

The doctrine of a sovereign will persists, Hägerström suggests, because it is felt to be an essential ingredient in the conceptions of guilt and "just punishment". When it can no longer plausibly be maintained that laws express the commands of Jehovah and that men are punished because they violate His commands, these modes of expression are transferred to "the legal order", which is then endowed with quasi-personal characteristics.[2] Punishment, on this view, is extended to those who are guilty of "offending against the

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[1] Of course, it was no news that law, even Roman Law, had grown out of ritualistic practices, but Hägerström thought that these practices exercised an influence at a much later date than was commonly supposed, that they were powerful ingredients within conceptions like *ius* and *dominium*. His conception of magic derived from Fraser. By "magic" he means a belief in the power to influence the course of events by means other than natural causality, and especially by the use of special forms of utterance and ritual. Of course Hägerström does not believe that there *really are* such powers; he is concerned, only, with the *belief* that there are.

[2] The transition, we might say, is from the "And the Lord spoke unto Moses saying" of Leviticus *via* "Be it enacted by the Queen's most excellent Majesty" to doctrines that "the people" or "the State" command the laws.

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will of the state". To reject the "will" theory, or to deny that there are objective "rights" and "duties", is felt, therefore, to undermine the entire system of punishment. But fortunately, Hägerström believes, the operations of the legal system can be justified on purely natural as well as on superstitious grounds.

"Unjust" punishment, for example, threatens the very nature of law as a method of co-operation. "It is therefore natural", Hägerström writes, "that an individual who suffers punishment not enjoined by the penal law should become an object of sympathy, for he is a victim of an act which is itself socially detrimental according to the general social estimation. The feeling of revolt in such cases will therefore always survive, even if feelings originally produced by superstition should lose their power over men's minds" (p. 366).

This doctrine is more fully developed by Lundstedt who, unlike Hägerström, had explicit political objectives—he was an intellectual leader in the Swedish Labour Party. His position can be put thus: historically, law has been largely based upon superstitions, upon metaphysical conceptions. These, no doubt, have gradually been interpreted and developed in a more realistic direction by generations of legislators and judges. But the further development of law as a "mechanism of social welfare" is now hindered by the relics of superstition incorporated in the ordinary conceptions of right, duty, justice. In judging criminals, for example, the idea of "guilt" interferes with the processes of punishment—which ought to be based simply on considerations of social utility. "The expressions (natural) justice, wrong, wrongful, lawful, legal right, fault and guilt, should be rejected", he concludes, "and not be retained, even as terms for or labels of certain realities" (p. 16)—in contrast, that is, with expressions like "liability", "owner", "rules of law" which Lundstedt is prepared to continue using, for practical reasons, even although they ordinarily contain metaphysical ingredients. Ross, on the other hand, is uneasy about the doctrine that a legal system can be, and ought to be, based on the ideal of "social welfare", which he regards as a metaphysical notion, an attempt to reinstate the idea of a "governing legal principle".[1] In *Law as Fact* Olivecrona presents a full-blown Hobbist theory of society, in which law is "justified" on the sole ground that the only alternative to a legal system is a state of anarchy, in which the native brutality and acquisitiveness of men would make a civilized life impossible.

There is an interesting problem at this point, reminiscent of a question which arises within Hume's *Treatise*. Hume's general line of argument is very like that adopted by the Scandinavian school.

[1] His criticisms appear in a number of Danish essays and books. I know them only through Lundstedt's reply (*Legal Thinking Revised*, pp. 171–80).

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Suppose, Hume argues, we take some such philosophical concept as "necessary connection", and ask ourselves what it amounts to in terms of actual experience. Then considering, say, two objects, A and B, which we ordinarily believe to be necessarily connected, the only relevant relation we find to hold between them is constant conjunction; experience reveals no "necessary connection". But mere "constant conjunction" cannot, by itself, account for the fact that when we experience A we feel *compelled* to expect B. What in fact happens, Hume concludes, is that our experience of constantly conjoined objects gives rise in us to a certain internal feeling—an *internal* necessity; we then wrongly suppose, by a form of projection, that this necessity objectively connects the constantly conjoined objects. There can be no metaphysical investigation, therefore, into "the nature of necessary connection" although there can be psychological investigations into the origin of our *idea* of necessary connection.[1]

Olivecrona's discussion of "legal bindingness" proceeds along exactly parallel lines. If we look at the relations holding between citizens and laws, we find no relation except, for example, the fact that the breaking of laws is sometimes followed by punishment. But such relations do not constitute the content of our idea of "legal bindingness". "Legal bindingness", then, can only be an idea in our mind, produced by our social experience but not directly copying any such experience. By "a sort of fiction"—to use Hume's phrase—we ascribe our feeling of being bound to the actual law itself, we think of the law as possessing the property of being intrinsically obligatory upon us. Since this is an illusion, however, there can be no metaphysical inquiry into the nature of legal bindingness, but only a socio-psychological inquiry into the origin of our idea of it.

Now Hume applied this same technique to a large number of everyday beliefs—our belief in personal identity, in external existence and so on—and decided that these were all without exception fictions. The effect, he tells us, was devastating; he could only preserve his equanimity by ignoring his own discoveries and behaving just as other men do—if in a somewhat chastened frame of mind.

Suppose, similarly, we agree with the Scandinavians that the power of the law, as we now know it, rests in part on magical beliefs, superstitions, metaphysics. Then if we belong to the optimistic-rationalistic school of thought, the practical conclusion will no doubt be obvious; we shall say, simply, "Well, then, let us remove from the legal system the elements of magic, superstition, metaphysics". This is Lundstedt's approach. But one may wonder—and Hägerström seems to have some hesitation on this point—whether the legal

[1] This interpretation of Hume is more fully worked out in my *Hume's Intentions* (1952).

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system could survive such a purification; whether in fact a non-magical system could ever be sufficiently powerful to work effectively—or, whether, we might add, "rational reforms" are not likely to produce a reaction towards a less rational system, of the Hitler type. Sir John Pollock once remarked that ritual is to the law as a bottle is to liquor; you cannot drink the bottle, but, equally, you cannot cope with the liquor without the bottle. From our point of view, since we are seeking to understand, rather than to reform, the law, these considerations are perhaps not strictly relevant. But they naturally raise their head. One should at least be clear that from the doctrine that law is partly supported by fictions it does not immediately follow that these fictions ought to be destroyed. (In his lectures, Olivecrona tells us,[1] Hägerström used to say that man has risen above the level of animals not as *animal sapiens* but as *animal mysticum*.)

One can raise similar questions in regard to the Scandinavian analysis of "rights". This is really too large a matter to be discussed as a mere addendum to the present paper; but the argument ought to be briefly sketched, if only as a further illustration of the school's analytic method. Their general line of reasoning might be paraphrased as follows: "There is a certain duality in the ordinary conception of a right. The possessor of a right is thought of at once, we might say, as having the legal system on his side, and as having the Universe on his side. Attempting to destroy one side of this dualism, a jurisprudentialist might argue that rights belong entirely to the realm of 'what ought to be', that, for example, men have a 'right' to possess property, even if no legal system has ever recognized this right. Then he will get into difficulties quite parallel to those which arise in giving an objective account of 'duties'. Alternatively he might attempt to be tough-minded, and maintain that to possess a right *merely means* to be certain of success in any one of a great range of legal actions. But this interpretation quite destroys what seem to be essential features of 'having a right'. We do not, in determining whether someone has 'rights' over certain property, for example, ask ourselves whether he would be sure to win every legal action which could turn on the question of his ownership. Indeed, this is something we could never be at all confident about; the owner might not have enough money to carry through the case, or might employ an incompetent counsel. And to say that he is the rightful owner if he has the *right* to win such cases—as distinct from actually being sure of success in them—is obviously circular. No doubt a person who has a right may be in a better legal position—in respect of that right—than a person who does not possess the right. But this better position is a *consequence* of possessing the right, not the meaning of that possession."

[1] Preface to *Inquiries*, p. xxiii.

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Hägerström sums up the position as follows: "We mean both by rightful properties and rightful claims, actual forces, which exist quite apart from our natural powers; forces which belong to another world than that of nature, and which legislation or other forms of law-giving merely liberate. The authority of the state merely lends its help to carry these forms, so far as may be, over into reality. But they exist before such help is given. So we can understand why one fights better if one believes that one has right on one's side. We feel that there are mysterious forces in the background from which we can derive support. Modern jurisprudence, under the sway of the universal demand which is now made upon science, seeks to discover facts corresponding to these supposed natural forces, and it lands in hopeless difficulties because there are no such facts" (p. 5).

Now this belief in "rights" is obviously magical, and Hägerström, in his studies of Roman Law, particularly emphasizes this side of the matter; he looks carefully at the actual procedures employed, say, in transferring rights over a slave to another person, and brings out the extent to which this formal process is regarded as a transfer of magical powers. The immense strength of Roman private law in contrast with Greek law, he suggests, derived from its reliance on firm magical rules rather than on general moral ideas.

Yet, at the same time, belief in "rights", if it can be invigorating, can also be dangerous, for it can easily lead to fanaticism. Within a given community, fanaticism is checked by the coercive power of the legal system, which prohibits self-redress, but in relations between states, where no such coercive power exists, the notion of rights is quite peculiarly dangerous—a point Lundstedt and Olivecrona both emphasize. "The State", Olivecrona writes, "is deemed to vindicate its rights itself . . . it is regarded as entitled to use force to this end . . . no prohibiting imperative is associated with the use of violence in these cases . . . the ideas of right and justice are part and parcel of the armaments of every State" (p. 205). This does not mean that the Scandinavians entirely reject the possibility of a "Law of Nations", if all this means is that states do in general keep to certain rules in their relations with one another. But since this law is not, like internal law, backed by organized and regularized force, we are particularly liable to suppose that it has a metaphysical basis, which endows states with "natural rights". Herein lies the danger of the conception of a "Law of Nations".

Our idea of a right, to express the matter summarily, has as its content "an ideal or fictitious power to control an object or to claim an action by another person" (Olivecrona, p. 94). There can, it follows, be no "science of rights" although there can be an inquiry into the origins of the *idea* and the influence it exerts in society. Does this mean that in the practice of the law the conception of

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"a right" should be wholly dropped? Lundstedt thinks that it might be, but admits that in practice the step would be a difficult one to take. He puts "rights" in a third group between expressions like "guilt" and "fault", which must, he thinks, be wholly abandoned, and expressions like "liability" which are relatively harmless. Hägerström, Olivecrona and Ross—the latter in a quite detailed way—are much more concerned to pick out the realistic from the metaphysical ingredients in the conception of right, as it actually functions in judicial decisions. Ross, for example, examining the traditional distinction between "real" and personal "rights", maintains that havoc has been created in jurispudence by the notion that real rights are mystical powers over things and personal rights are mystical powers over persons. But then he goes on to attempt a "rational reconstruction"—to use an expression which now has a certain vogue in philosophy—of the two notions, interpreting a "real" right as a right to certain specific objects (e.g. ownership of, or contractual rights to, a certain block of land), and a "personal" right as a right to objects which are not precisely specified, e.g. the right to select goods to the value of £1,000. The importance of such "rational reconstructions", he argues, is that they draw attention to actual distinctions of structure which the law has only vaguely apprehended, and to principles of action with which the law works without being quite sure what it is doing, while removing the inconsistencies to which metaphysical and mystical notions of "right" give birth.

More generally, the conception of a "right" is useful in the practice of the law as a particular mode of expressing legal imperatives. If, for example, a law says that a workman injured in the course of his employment has a *right* to compensation, it by means of this language lays down patterns of conduct for employers, for judges, for administrative officers. And it does this in a way which helps to damp down possible feelings of opposition; there is now associated with the payment of compensation the mysterious force of "right". Furthermore, just because it is an imaginary power, there is no difficulty in ascribing rights to babies, or lunatics, or juristic persons —and this is very convenient for legal purposes.

The conception of "rights", Olivecrona argues, is interpolated between a certain act (say, the giving of a loan) and the action of a judge. What the legislator intends is that when certain actions take place (a refusal to pay back the loan) a judge will know how to determine the case, and administrative officers what subsequent steps to take. That is all that is strictly essential, from a purely executive point of view. But it is customary to speak of the giving of the loan as creating a "right" in the creditor, a right which the law then enforces. This fiction is convenient, because it enables us to

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talk generally, say, of "property rights"—which may be acquired in a variety of ways but which have, in every case, certain legal consequences. The idea of rights was not introduced into law merely as a method of achieving these convenient results; but they do exist, and, by reference to them, one can "justify", as distinct from explaining the origins of, the use of concepts like "right" in law.

In this paper, I have restricted myself, for the most part, to an exposition of the views of the Scandinavian school, or rather, of such of their views as seemed to me central to the understanding of their standpoint. If I have not paused to criticize, this is partly because I have found the task of exposition sufficiently intimidating to absorb my whole attention. But I should also admit to a very considerable degree of sympathy with the views I have been expounding and perhaps I have unduly emphasized those aspects of the Scandinavian philosophy of law with which my sympathy is greatest.

Like the Scandinavian school, I should lay it down as a preliminary requirement for a satisfactory philosophy of law that it should be anti-metaphysical. Yet equally, I should agree with them, the traditional positivistic theories of law do not give a realistic account of legal systems as we actually know them; rather they outline a legal system which they would take to be "ideal", one in which we would know exactly what we were being told to do, who was telling us to do it, and what we were going to get out of obedience and disobedience. But in legal systems as we actually encounter them the first two conditions are certainly not fulfilled: legal statements contain vague and metaphysical expressions, they are not commands, and the question of sanctions only arises in special cases. "The Law" floats above us as a system of imperatives, which we explore in detail only when we feel that our "rights" have been infringed (to see whether we have legal redress) or when we are threatened with the possibility of civil or criminal actions.

The Scandinavian school take these striking features of our everyday attitudes to the law—which are very different from our attitudes, say, to somebody who is ordering us about—as their starting-point. Yet at the same time they deny that *in fact* there is a metaphysical entity called "the Law", or that its imperatives are "binding" upon us in some supra-natural sense of that word, or that we have, in virtue of our nature and situation, rights which the law ought to respect. The question, for them, is how these beliefs arise, and what function they play in the maintenance of a legal system.

Their position—and it is mine too—is comparable to that of somebody who is quite convinced that religious beliefs are false, but is not prepared to maintain that they arise merely out of a wish

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for "pie-in-the-sky". Whatever one thinks of the detailed teachings of the Scandinavian school—and I am in no position to judge very many of them—they have, I think, drawn attention to facts of which any satisfactory sociology of law must take account.

Another important point in Hägerström's philosophy of law is his consistently pluralistic approach. Consider the case of judicial decisions. Some philosophers of law have said that the judge, by an exercise in pure deduction, simply interprets the laws of the land, as they apply in a particular case; others that his decisions actually constitute the law. On the one view, he is a deductive mechanism; on the other view, the actual sovereign. Yet neither theory seems to be compatible with the actual procedures of judges. Sometimes they seem directly to "apply the law", at other times to be so interpreting it as virtually to be making a new law. Any realistic account of the law, then, will have to recognize that amongst the factors influencing judicial decisions the patterns of conduct incorporated in legislative acts, in common law, in precedent, play an important, and sometimes the crucial, role, and yet at the same time that there are always other factors involved—these factors varying in character and strength from place to place and time to time.

This means, of course, that there can be no simple straightforward answer to the sort of questions philosophers of law are accustomed to ask: to such questions as "What is the real, or essential, nature of a judicial decision?" One may be able to state in a very general way the *kinds* of factors which influence judicial decisions; but then will pass on to consider the importance of these factors in various judicial systems, or at different times in the history of a single judicial system, or with different judges in the same system.

"Philosophy of law" will consist, simply, in carrying farther the sort of anti-metaphysical analysis in which Hägerström has engaged; for the rest, the traditional questions will be replaced by problems in sociology or—for one can inquire into the validity of the interpretative methods used by judges—by problems in the logic of law. All this may sound rather dull when it is contrasted with broad speculations about "the purpose of the law", or "the grounds of its validity" or "the essence of legal norms"; but at least it will help us to understand *what actually happens* in one of the most important areas of human conduct.

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IMPARTIALITY AND CONSISTENCY

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I

It is quite commonly held nowadays that universalizability is a purely formal feature of moral terms, or perhaps of moral rules. To say that something is good, it is asserted, implies (in some sense of "implies") that anything else with the same (relevant) characteristics is also good; to say that Jones ought to do X is to commit oneself to saying that, in the same circumstances, Smith ought to do X. In pointing this out, it is suggested, one is not oneself taking up a moral position, or laying down a particular moral rule, but simply making it clear what a moral utterance is. The principle of universalizability is thus a principle of meta-ethics, not of morality itself. That moral judgments are universalizable, Hare tells us, is an analytic statement: "analytic by virtue of the meaning of the word moral".[1]

But even if that is true, it is important to know how the word "moral" is being used. For moral terms, like many others, have as a rule both a descriptive and an evaluative use. Consider, as a parallel, the word "poetry". In the descriptive use the sonnets of Shakespeare and the helpful messages of Patience Strong are both poetry; but when we think of the evaluative use, we protest that the latter are not poetry at all. In the one sense "poetry" is contrasted with "prose": in the other with "verse", or perhaps "doggerel". Sometimes only the evaluative sense may be present, as in "the poetry of motion". In the evaluative sense, "there is no bad poetry" is an analytic statement; in the descriptive sense it is synthetic (and, as it happens, false).

In the same way, "moral" has a descriptive use, in which it is contrasted with "unmoral" or "non-moral"; and an evaluative use, in which it is contrasted with "immoral". In the first of these it makes sense to talk of the moral policy (or "morality") of Satan; though here again, when we think of the other use, we are tempted to protest that this isn't a morality at all, but the denial of all moral principles. And here again, "there are no bad moral principles" is, in the evaluative sense, an analytic statement; in the descriptive sense, it is synthetic (and false).

Any criterion for the use of "poetry" in the descriptive sense will not itself be evaluative. If we say, for example, that poetry is distinguished from prose by its regular rhythm, we are simply

[1] *Aristotelian Society. Proceedings*, 1954–5, p. 298.

clarifying our use of terms: we are not putting forward an aesthetic theory. We might go on to say either that a regular rhythm contributes to literary values or that it detracts from them. But if we say that verse is distinguished from poetry in that it evokes only stock responses and unsubtle emotions, we are laying down an aesthetic principle; we are taking a stand on a matter of aesthetic theory. And this will be true even if everyone agrees with us.

In the same way, a criterion that serves to distinguish the moral from the non-moral (as distinct from the immoral) will not itself be a moral principle: it will be morally neutral. But any principle which serves to distinguish the moral from the immoral will itself be a moral principle.

A further parallel may be useful. Very roughly, and without going into the juristic refinements that would be necessary for an accurate statement, one may say that a law is a precept enacted or permitted by a sovereign authority and enforced by the courts. This is an analytic statement. Now suppose that someone added to this that a law is in accordance with principles of natural justice. There is a case for saying that this, too, is an analytic statement. There are certainly uses of "law" in which this is implied, as when we talk of "the reign of law". Or we might say, of an enactment not in accordance with natural justice, "This is not law, but tyranny!" Moreover, the courts might insist on interpreting an enactment so as to make it in accordance with natural justice: that is to say, they might refuse to count anything not in accordance with natural justice as an enactment of the sovereign authority. In spite of all this, I think it is clear that "law must be in accordance with natural justice" is not a purely formal, legally neutral principle enabling us to distinguish a legal rule from a non-legal one. It is rather (when it is enforced by the courts) a substantive legal principle, a part of a particular body of law rather than a formal characteristic of all law; and, when it is not enforced by the courts, it is a moral principle that ought to be part of the law, but is not. For there clearly might be an enactment of the sovereign authority, enforced by the courts, which was not in accordance with natural justice. And it would be clearer to say of such an enactment that it was a bad law than to say that it was not a law at all. At the very least, it would be important to realize that to say of such an enactment that it was "not law" would be very different from saying of a rule not enforced by the courts that it was "not law".

In the same way, I want to suggest that it is misleading to say that "moral principles are universalizable" is an analytic statement unless the principle of universalizability is itself morally neutral. A principle that is put forward as enabling us to distinguish moral terms from others cannot itself be a substantive moral principle.

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It cannot, for example, be such that we would automatically condemn any action that failed to conform to it. Even if this is disputed, it must at least be admitted that it is important to know which sort of principle the principle of universalizability is: whether it is substantive or formal; whether it is morally neutral or not; whether it is like "law is enforced by the courts" or "law is in accordance with natural justice". My thesis will be that in fact there are two principles of universalizability, one substantive and one formal, and that they are very frequently confused.

II

To elaborate the statement that there are two very different principles, both of which might be called the Principle of Universalizability, though in fact they belong to quite distinct categories:

(A) One ought not to make exceptions in one's own favour.

It is clear that this is a moral principle. Anyone who asserts it is taking a moral stand. It could be significantly (though not, perhaps, plausibly) denied; and the issue between someone who asserted it and someone who denied it would be a moral issue. Anyone who denied A might well be accused of putting forward an *immoral* principle; but it could hardly be held that he was saying something that had nothing to do with morality, that lay outside the sphere of morals altogether. One proof of this is that we would feel inclined to condemn anyone who denied A; or, at least, who acted on the resulting principle. And, in any case, it is hard to see how the omission of "not" could transform a moral principle into a non-moral (as distinct from an immoral) one.

Against this, it might perhaps be argued that "One ought to make exceptions in one's own favour" (as distinct from "Make exceptions in your own favour!") is a contradiction in terms. For, it might be said, it is part of the meaning of the word "ought" that anything one ought to do cannot also be an instance of making exceptions in one's own favour. Consequently, if anyone did say that one ought to make exceptions in one's own favour, we would be at a loss to understand his use of the word "ought". If this is accepted, it follows that "one ought not to make exceptions in one's own favour" is not, after all, a moral principle in the sense in which I have been using that term. It is an analytic statement, not a synthetic one. To assert it is to utter a tautology, not to take up a moral position.

But this seems clearly untrue. For it is quite clear how the word "ought" is being used here. What it adds to the simple imperative ("Make exceptions in your own favour!") is simply the suggestion

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that such conduct is worthy of approval. And it is quite meaningful either to affirm or to deny that making exceptions in one's own favour is worthy of approval. Neither statement is tautologous, and neither is contradictory.

But, it will be said, this is because of an ambiguity in both the word "ought" and the word "approval". "One ought to make exceptions in one's own favour" might, indeed, mean "A man is a fool not to make exceptions in his own favour"; and this is a meaningful statement. But then the "ought" is not a moral "ought", and the implied approval is not moral approval. It is only if "one ought to make exceptions in one's own favour" is put forward as a moral statement that it is self-contradictory. For then it implies, not merely that such conduct is worthy of approval, but that it is worthy of moral approval: and "not making exceptions in one's own favour" is built into the meaning of "moral approval".

But this, too, seems false. We can quite well understand the concept of moral approval without invoking the quite different concept of not making exceptions in one's own favour. There is a sense in which we no doubt would be at a loss to understand anyone who did feel genuine moral approval for exceptions in one's own favour; but it is the sense in which we would not understand anyone who believed that New York was in Australia, or who enjoyed having his arm cut off. It would not be like our puzzlement at the phrase "a square circle".

This first principle (A), then is itself a moral principle. It could be significantly denied; and to assert it is to take a moral stand, not to make a purely formal point about the logic of moral utterances.

Now let us look at the second principle:

(B) If R is a reason for X to do Q, it is: (i) a reason for X to do something like Q in similar circumstances; (ii) a reason for someone else, Y, who is like X in the relevant respects, to do something like Q in similar circumstances.

For example: Suppose that, at a party, I take a glass of beer from a tray and, after sipping it, put it aside and select another glass. My reason is that the first glass of beer is flat. It follows: (i) that the flatness of another glass of beer (perhaps at another party) will also be a reason for me to reject it; (ii) that it will also be a reason for anyone else who shares my taste in beer to reject it.

It is quite clear that B, unlike A, is not a moral principle. It may, perhaps, be a logical one, though this is not at all clear. Whereas I have argued that A is synthetic, B is, I think, analytic: analytic by virtue of the meaning of the word "reason".

Let us suppose that X does not, at a second party, reject a glass

of flat beer. This need not surprise us: it may be, for example, that this time he does not know his host so well, and is afraid of offending him. That is to say, the relevant circumstances are not the same. Or if we like we can say, perhaps more accurately, that the only relevant circumstances (the flatness of the beer and his own taste) are the same; that he has, therefore, a reason for rejecting the beer; but that he also has a reason (and a stronger one) for not rejecting it. If there are no obvious countervailing reasons of this kind, we shall be inclined to account for his behaviour by inventing one: saying, perhaps, that he is feeling indolent and just can't be bothered.

This last expedient may make us suspicious of our principle. It looks as if we would never be prepared to admit that all the relevant circumstances (including the absence of countervailing reasons) *were* the same, unless R did function as a reason on both occasions. There is, however, no need to concede this: for X himself may be in a position to know that the circumstances are the same. Suppose that, having given the flatness of the beer as his reason for rejecting it at the first party, he deliberately chooses a glass of flat beer at the second party. Suppose, further, that he assures us that he has no countervailing reasons and that his taste in beer has not changed in the meantime. "The flatness of *that* glass of beer", he tells us, "was a reason for rejecting it: the flatness of *this* glass of beer is not a reason for rejecting it. There is no other relevant difference between the two glasses, or in the surrounding circumstances." We should, I think, be at a loss to understand him. His use of the word "reason" would clearly not be the same as ours.

If, on the other hand, he were to say: "I had no reason for rejecting the first glass of beer: it was a mere whim, or impulse" then we would no longer be surprised if, on another occasion, he failed to reject a precisely similar glass of beer. B, then, indicates some difference between deliberate and merely whimsical behaviour: between actions for which we have reasons and those for which we have none.

Now, moral terms may well have something to do with giving reasons for actions. To say that one ought to do something no doubt does imply that there are reasons for doing it: and, when "ought" is given its moral use, these will be moral reasons. To that extent, it will be true that (B) describes a logical feature of moral terms. But it would be quite misleading to suggest that B is specially characteristic of moral reasons as distinct from other types of reason, or of moral terms as distinct from most other types of term. It is not, for example, any more characteristic of the moral than of the non-moral use of "ought"; nor is it more characteristic of "ought" than of a host of other, non-moral, terms. The distinction that

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B points to is not between the moral and the non-moral, but between deliberate and arbitrary, or random, behaviour: it is relevant to morals only so far as that distinction is relevant to morals.

So far my main point has been that A and B are utterly different principles. A is a moral principle, and is synthetic. B is perhaps logical (it is certainly not moral) and is analytical. Because it is itself a moral principle, A could not be used as a purely formal means of distinguishing moral principles from non-moral ones. B, on the other hand, could be so used, but would then be misleading, since the distinction it points to is a different, though not utterly unrelated one.

One might call A the Moral Principle of Universalizability and B the Logical Principle of Universalizability. I think, though, that it is better to call A the Principle of Impartiality and B the Principle of Consistency.

III

Let us now have a look at the way in which the principle of universalizability has figured in recent writings on ethics.

Hare, in *The Language of Morals*,[1] contrasts "ought" with other imperatives. The difference, he tells us, is just this: that "ought" is universalizable while these other ("singular") imperatives are not. "Use the starting-handle", he tells us, is a prescription which "applies directly only to the occasion on which it is offered". On the other hand, "you ought to use the starting-handle", though it too applies directly to an individual occasion, "also invokes or appeals to some more general . . . prescription", such as "If the engine fails to start at once on the self-starter, one ought always to use the starting-handle".

What this amounts to is that ought-sentences are, and singular imperatives are not, backed by reasons, and that it is characteristic of reasons that, if they apply to this occasion, they apply to all relevantly similar occasions. The only difficulty is that this would seem to be true of singular imperatives in just the same way as it is true of ought-sentences. Hare's claim is a very cautious one: he says merely that, in uttering ought-sentences, "we seem to imply (in a loose sense) that there is *some* principle . . . that we are invoking—though it may not be at once clear, even to us, what the principle is".

This much is certainly true, at least as a general rule, of singular imperatives. If your instructor tells you to use the starting-handle, it is certainly reasonable to object: "But yesterday, in precisely the same situation, you told me (or your other pupil) not to use

[1] Pp. 155–7.

the starting-handle". And you can say this whether he said "Use the starting-handle!" or "You ought to use the starting-handle". It makes no difference; for, in either case, you are entitled to assume that his instructions are not arbitrary ones.

Hare admits this; but his point is that, if the instruction *were* arbitrary, it would still be couched in the imperative; whereas it could not be put in the form of an ought-sentence: this would be "logically illegitimate" and "so eccentric" a use of the word "ought" as "to make people wonder what I meant by it".

If Hare is right, then "You ought to use the starting-handle; but there is no particular reason; you just ought to use it" would be self-contradictory; whereas "Use the starting-handle; there is no particular reason; just use it" would not be. This may be true; but it hardly seems obviously true. Both sentences seem odd (or "logically illegitimate") in precisely the same way, and cause just the same kind of bewilderment. Hare's own example does not help much. The instructor may, he suggests, "be merely prescribing for this particular occasion (perhaps because [he has] thought 'Let's see if he knows how to crank a car') without any thought of there being a general principle for all occasions of this kind". But: (i) In that case, there *is* an appeal to a general principle ("when there is doubt about whether one can exercise a skill, one ought to try to exercise it"; or perhaps, "the way to perfect one's use of the starting-handle is just to use it"). (ii) In this situation, the instructor might well say: "You ought to use the starting-handle now, so that we can see how well you can do that".

Let us, however, concede this point to Hare. Perhaps it is true that some commands are arbitrary, and that these can be expressed by the singular imperative, but not by the use of "ought". Even if true, however, this is quite misleading. It is misleading because it suggests that here we have an essential difference between singular imperatives on the one hand and ought-sentences on the other. The truth is that this is a difference between all ought-sentences, plus nearly all singular imperatives, on the one hand, and a few very rare, quite unimportant, quite uncharacteristic imperatives on the other. It is clear that this will not tell us very much about what marks ought-sentences off from all other types of sentence, whether the "ought" in question is the moral or the non-moral "ought".

So far it is, I think, clear that Hare's appeal is simply to the Principle of Consistency; and that this is not really a very illuminating statement about moral terms: it excludes nothing except random or arbitrary actions. If Hare or his readers think that he has said more than he has, this may well be because they are confusing the Principle of Consistency with the Principle of Impartiality. To define

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moral utterances as universal prescriptions, or prescriptions which apply to everybody, suggests the latter as much as the former. This point will be developed in the next section; the point in this one is simply that most formal statements of Universalizability are simply statements of the Principle of Consistency.

A similar contrast to the one Hare makes between "singular" and "universal" imperatives is sometimes made between "good" and other adjectives. "X is good", it is pointed out, implies that anything else like X (in the relevant respects) is also good. This is certainly true; but quite trivial. It would seem to apply to any term whatever. If I say, for example, "this piece of cloth is yellow", you are certainly entitled to infer: (a) that another piece from the same bolt will also be yellow; (b) that this piece will be called yellow by other competent judges.

It is true that there is one important difference between "yellow" and "good". The "relevant respect" in which the second piece of cloth must be like the first is simply its yellowness. Two things can be different in all other respects, but alike in being yellow; but they cannot be different in all other respects, but alike in being good. But to say this is merely to say that "good" is what Ross calls a "consequential characteristic", or what Hare calls "supervenient". It is generally assumed, however, that universalizability is different from supervenience: that "good" is both consequential *and* universalizable. One can concede that "yellow" is different from "good" in that it is not consequential; but there does not seem to be any further point of difference that would enable us to say that "good" is, and "yellow" is not, universalizable.

The contrast between "good" and other terms is made, in rather more detail, by Bernard Mayo.[1] Mayo tells us that, if I say "this is a good spade", I am not merely saying that I prefer it to most others. I am also saying, or at least implying: (a) that I would prefer any other spade with the same relevant characteristics to spades without them; (b) that any other competent gardener would have the same preference. On the other hand, he says, if I tell you that I prefer this spade to most others for sentimental reasons, you are not entitled to draw these inferences.

Now, if we take Mayo's words strictly, this is just not true. After all, there must be something about the sentimentally valued spade that rouses this attitude in me. It may be, for example, that this is the spade with which my late wife used to dig the garden on sunny week-ends, while I watched her from a deck-chair in the shade. You are certainly entitled to infer that the spade has *some* characteristic of this sort: one or more of a wide but fairly definite range of characteristics. And this is all that one is entitled to infer

[1] *Ethics and the Moral Life*, pp. 24–6.

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about the good spade. Moreover, you are certainly entitled to infer that I shall have the same feelings for other spades with the same *relevant* characteristics. If my wife had two spades, for example, which she used on alternate week-ends, and there is no relevant difference between them, I shall presumably cherish the other spade as well. Finally, you are, I think, entitled to infer that other people like me will have similar feelings towards objects like this spade in the relevant respects: for example, that other sentimental widowers will cherish their wives' possessions.

There are, it is true, differences between good spades and senti-mentally valued ones; but Mayo has not succeeded in specifying the differences. The difference between a practical and a sentimental reason for valuing something is not, as he seems to think, that the one conforms, and the other does not conform, to the Principle of Consistency. Nor is this the difference between sentimental reasons and moral ones. In this respect, "good" (in both the moral and the non-moral use) is no different from "sentimentally valued".

What the difference does consist in is just this: the "relevant respects" in which one sentimentally valued spade must be like another are different from those in which one good spade must be like another. It might even be said that they are not characteristics of the spade at all: it is just that the spade has played a particular part in my personal history. This comes out in my having to say, not that other sentimental widowers will have the same feelings for *my* wife's possessions, but that they will have them for *their* wives' possessions. The objects which have a particular relation to me may be quite different from those which have the same relation to you. To call a spade "good", on the other hand, probably implies some-thing about its intrinsic, as distinct from its relational, characteristics.

Moreover, there is also a difference in the "relevant respects" in which I must be like the other people who, it is implied, pass a similar judgment on the spade. To talk about "other sentimental widowers" is not quite like talking about "other competent gar-deners". The first phrase refers to other people with the same feelings as I have; the second to other people with the same purposes as I have. Now, if I say something about my feelings, of course I imply something about the feelings of other people with the same feelings. This comes very close to being a tautology. It is not quite a taut-ology: for I am implying that there *are* other people with the same feelings. If that were not the case, if sentimentality were something peculiar to me, and not a well understood psychological phenomenon, the term "sentimentally valued" would not be understood. But "this is a good spade" implies rather more than this. It is not just that there are other people who share my feelings about spades, and that they, too, will approve of this spade. Whether a person is

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a competent gardener or not can be tested without considering his feelings about spades at all: by asking whether he is successful at attaining the purposes for which spades are used. With the phrase "sentimental widowers", on the other hand, the reference to feelings cannot be eliminated.

There are, then, important differences between the implications of "good" and "sentimentally valued". But, if these were the differences Mayo had in mind, he has at least expressed himself misleadingly: for he says nothing of an implicit reference to intrinsic, as distinct from relational, characteristics, or to other people with the same purposes, as distinct from the same feelings, as the speaker. More than this: if these differences are the ones he has in mind, his statement is much more controversial than he takes it to be. For, though "a good spade" is of course an example of the non-moral use of "good", Mayo clearly means to make a point about the moral use of "good" as well. Now, whether the relevant respects in which one morally good thing resembles another morally good thing are intrinsic or relational characteristics is a hotly debated point: it is one of the points at issue between moral objectivists and moral subjectivists. Again, while it is no doubt true that any moral judgment implies some consensus of opinion, it is far from clear whether the people who share in this consensus just happen to have the same moral feelings or whether they are united by some more objective characteristic, such as superior (or inferior) "moral insight", as well.

We have, then, this position: so long as Mayo confines himself to stating the Principle of Consistency, he is saying something quite safe about the formal features of the word "good"; but he has not succeeded in distinguishing "good" from other terms, such as "sentimentally valued". If he means more than this, he has escaped triviality, but he is no longer confining himself to non-controversial, formal features of the word "good". If he is not taking a stand on a substantive moral principle, he is at least taking up a controversial position in meta-ethics; perhaps he is doing both.

There is another point here too. To judge something by its relation to *me* rather than by its intrinsic characteristics; to appeal to the judgment of those who happen to share *my* feelings rather than to those with some objective qualification for judging: isn't this, in a sense, to make an exception in my own favour? The connection is not entirely clear; but, in a rather vague way, the differences that strike us between the good and the sentimentally valued spade do seem to have some relevance to the Principle of Impartiality.

The only point that need be insisted on, however, is this: When he comes to make a careful statement of the difference between "good" and other terms, Mayo confines himself to stating the

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Principle of Consistency. He then immediately proceeds to put more weight upon that Principle than it can bear. In this he resembles Hare. I suspect that this is because the Principle of Consistency has been confused with the Principle of Impartiality. Nothing I have said so far, however, establishes this. In the next section I shall consider how the two principles can become confused.

IV

Consider again the man who says "The flatness of *this* glass of beer is a reason for rejecting it; but the flatness of *that* glass of beer is not a reason for rejecting it, though there is no other relevant difference between them". I said that we would be at a loss to understand him.

Now suppose he says further: "The flatness of this glass of beer is a reason for *me* to reject it, but it is not a reason for *you* to reject it, though our taste in beer is the same, and there is no other relevant difference between us."

This statement is ambiguous. It might be exactly parallel to the first statement. He might mean that what was a reason in one case was not a reason in another exactly similar case: he would then be using "reason" in some unintelligible way. But he might mean (and we would probably take him to mean) something quite different: that, while anyone with his taste in beer had a reason for rejecting this glass of beer, he was not prepared to allow anyone but himself to *act* on that reason. There is nothing in the least unintelligible about this: we understand such behaviour only too well. It is, no doubt, unfair and selfish: it incurs *moral* disapproval; but it is not in the least muddle-headed or irrational, as the first statement seems to be. The man who says this is not ignoring a rule about the use of the word "reason": the Principle of Consistency; he is breaking a moral rule: the Principle of Impartiality. He is making an exception in his own favour.

It is clear from the above example how easily the two Principles can be confused, in spite of the great differences between them; for the ambiguity in the second statement is not obvious until it has been pointed out. This still does not establish, but it does make more probable, the suggestion that, in recent ethical discussion, philosophers have begun with a formal statement of the Principle of Consistency, and have then gradually edged into a discussion of the Principle of Impartiality, without noticing the difference.

There is further confirmation in the examples usually given of principles that are not universalizable: egoism and patriotism. It is generally admitted[1] that there are two types of egoist or patriot.

[1] E.g. by Gellner (*Aristotelian Society. Proceedings*, 1954–5, p. 116) and Hare (Ibid., p. 299).

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There is the man who says, in effect: "Let everyone serve *his* interests (or *his* country's interests) to the exclusion of the interests of others" and there is the man who says: "Let everyone serve *my* interests (or *my* country's interests) to the exclusion of the interests of others." The first of these, Hare tells us, is adopting a universalizable principle; the second is not.

"If a patriot thinks that he owes certain duties to his own country, but agrees that other people owe similar duties to their countries, his maxim is of type U ('one owes such-and-such duties to one's country') . . . But if he thinks that other people do not owe the same duties to their countries, then—unless he points to relevant differences between his country and others—his maxim is not of type U."[1]

What has been less generally noticed is that the maxim of the second (or non-U) type of egoist or patriot is ambiguous in precisely the way that the statement about the glass of beer is ambiguous. For what he is saying amounts to this: the fact that an action serves my (my country's) interests is a reason for me to do it; but that it serves your (your country's) interests is not a reason for you to do it. And, as before, this may be an unintelligible (and no doubt muddle-headed) use of the word "reason"; or it may be a perfectly intelligible, and quite clear-headed, but reprehensibly selfish utterance.

Perhaps the clearest way to put this is as a difference between "approving" and "wanting". If I approve of my doing whatever serves my interests, I can hardly fail to approve of your doing whatever serves *your* interests. But it need not follow that I *want* you to do what serves your interests. There is nothing especially odd about wanting others to do things we do not approve of. A general, for example, may well want the opposing general to follow a plan of campaign of which he could not, as a military strategist, approve. If he can, he may try to induce him to follow such a plan of campaign. The clear-headed (but non-U) egoist or patriot may be in precisely this position: his policy may be to induce others to do what is in his interests rather than in theirs. Privately he thinks that they are fools to do this (i.e. he does not approve of their doing this); but it suits him that they should be fools.

There are, then, at least three possible types of "maxim":

1. I may want X, and approve of my wanting X, approve of others wanting X, and also want others to want X.

This is what most people seem to have in mind when they speak of universalizable maxims. The chief difficulty arises when my obtaining X is incompatible with others also obtaining X. Egoism

[1] *Aristotelian Society. Proceedings.* 1954–5, p. 299.

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and patriotism are relevant here just because they are concerned with this kind of situation. The U-type egoist or patriot is presumably the man who, recognizing this, still wants others to pursue their interests rather than his. Gellner suggests that this is the attitude of the games-player: such a man is saying, in effect, "Each for himself, and let the best man win"; he is more interested in the contest than in victory. For this reason he doubts whether this is the attitude we really have in mind when we speak of egoism or patriotism.

2. I may want X, and approve of my wanting X, and approve of others wanting X, but not want others to want X.

This is the position of the man referred to above as the clear-headed, but non-U, egoist.

3. I may want X and approve of my wanting X, but disapprove of others wanting X.

Applying these three types of maxim or principle, we get three types of egoist or patriot.

The first of these is saying in effect: "Everyone ought to put his own interests (the interests of his own country) first and ignore those of others." There is nothing in this to conflict with the Principle of Consistency, but there is room for doubt about whether it does or does not conflict with the Principle of Impartiality. For this man is making exceptions in his own favour in one sense, but not in another. He is making exceptions; but any exceptions he makes he is prepared to let others make too.

It is clear that, when philosophers have doubted whether such a maxim is or is not universalizable, they have identified the Principle of Universalizability with the Principle of Impartiality.

The second man is saying, in effect: "Since it is reasonable for me to put my interests (the interests of my country) first, it is reasonable for others to put their interests (the interests of their country) first; but, since their aim, though quite as reasonable as mine, is incompatible with mine, I shall do my best to stop them from pursuing it." He is quite clearly breaking the Principle of Impartiality, and it is equally clear that he is conforming to the Principle of Consistency. It is therefore significant that philosophers have generally taken him to be breaking the Principle of Universalizability. Here again, the Principle of Universalizability is being identified with the Principle of Impartiality.

The third man not only pursues the same policy as the second man, but does not recognize that what is reasonable for him must also be reasonable for anyone else in the same circumstances. He is ignoring both the Principle of Impartiality and the Principle of Consistency.

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The difference between the third man and the second may be illustrated by an example. Suppose that there are two patriotic Britishers. One of them realizes that he wishes to further Britain's interests only because Britain happens to be the country he was born in. He may well try to induce a German, say, also to serve Britain's interests rather than Germany's; but, if he succeeds, he will despise the German. He will, of course, praise those Germans who fall in with his wishes and revile those who don't; but, in his secret thoughts, he will despise the pliant Germans and approve of the recalcitrant ones. This man is a patriot of the second type. He is, no doubt, cynical and Machiavellian: if you like, thoroughly immoral. But he is not muddle-headed. And he is not non-moral; he has a morality, though no doubt it is a bad morality.

The other patriot pursues the same policy as the first, with this difference: he does not, after all, despise the German whom he has induced to serve Britain's interests. He not only *says* that he approves of him but really does feel towards the German's action exactly as he feels towards his own. This is the third type of patriot. He is neither cynical nor Machiavellian: morally, he is perhaps less reprehensible than the other. But he is certainly muddle-headed.

Indeed, he is probably too muddle-headed to exist. There are, of course, plenty of muddle-headed patriots; but it is doubtful if any of them admit to themselves that their only reason for serving, say, Britain's interests is that they happen to have been born and brought up there. They are much more likely to persuade themselves that their devotion is due to some intrinsic (as distinct from relational) characteristic of Britain: perhaps that it is a democratic country. Now, if they are merely saying: "Everyone ought to put first the interests of a democratic country", they are not following a maxim of the third type at all; for they are ignoring neither the Principle of Consistency nor the Principle of Impartiality. Perhaps, however, they are deceiving themselves, and this is not the *real* reason for their patriotism. Perhaps the real reason is just that they were born and bred in Britain? It is still highly significant that they find self-deception necessary. For once we acknowledge to ourselves that something is a reason for us, we can hardly fail to recognize that it will also be a reason for anyone else in our circumstances. It is, that is to say, hardly possible to break the Principle of Consistency consciously. This confirms the view that it is a logical principle, which is built into our concept of "reasons" for acting.

Even if patriots of the third type do not really exist, the distinction between the third and the second type is of the utmost importance. It is because this distinction has been ignored that it is often assumed that egoists and patriots are being irrational as well as immoral; or at least that they are, not merely renouncing a moral

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principle (the Principle of Impartiality) to which most of us subscribe, but neglecting a logical feature of the word "moral" (in the way that the third type of patriot would be neglecting a logical feature of the word "reason"). It is said, for example, by one philosopher,[1] that the egoist is not putting forward a moral doctrine at all, not even a perverse or malign morality; and, by another,[2] that "to act on the principle of furthering one's own interests and ignoring everyone else's is a perfectly possible, and, in a sense, rational thing to do; but it is not to act on a moral principle, for the word 'moral' excludes such behaviour".

To say this is to use "moral" in the sense in which it contrasts, not with "non-moral", but with "immoral". Hence it is to obscure the distinction between taking a moral stand and making a morally neutral point about the difference between moral principles and other principles of action. There is always a temptation to define away those moral principles of which we disapprove. But to yield to this temptation is to invite philosophical confusion. We are lured into this confusion by another confusion, between the logical Principle of Universalizability and the moral one.

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"But", it will be said, "you have yourself distinguished between 'wanting' and 'approving'. And you have said that to want something is not necessarily to want others to want the same thing; whereas to approve of something for oneself is to approve of that thing for others. Now, isn't this precisely the distinction between moral and non-moral terms that is meant when it is said that moral terms are universalizable? And isn't 'want' a non-moral term, and 'approve' a moral one?"

The answer to this objection is, I believe, quite simple. "Approve" is not being used here in any specifically moral sense. All that is meant is that, if it is reasonable for me to do a given action, it is reasonable for anyone else to do the same type of action in the same circumstances. And this is true quite generally, whether the reasons for acting are moral, or prudential, or of any other kind. The distinction, in short, is not between moral and non-moral terms at all.

"But", the objector may persist, "granted that *non-moral* approval need conform only to the Principle of Consistency, mightn't it be the case that *moral* approval must conform to both the Principle of Consistency and the Principle of Impartiality? Isn't this the difference

[1] B. H. Medlin in "Ultimate Principles and Ethical Egoism", *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, August 1957, p. 113.
[2] J. Kemp in "Foundations of Morality". *Philosophical Quarterly*, October 1957, p. 316.

between saying: 'You would be a fool to do that' and 'You ought not to do that'? To say the first is to imply that absolutely everyone in your position would be a fool not to do that. To say the second is not merely to imply that everyone in your position ought to do that, but to commit oneself to a policy of assisting and applauding anyone in your position who does that."

Now this is, in a sense, quite true. It is true simply because the Principle of Impartiality is, at least in our culture, a fairly fundamental one. Consequently we would be puzzled if someone (like the second type of egoist or patriot) did consistently follow a moral policy which involved ignoring the Principle of Impartiality. We would be inclined to say that his policy was not really a moral policy at all, and that he could not really feel *moral* approval for it. But our puzzlement would be like our puzzlement at the men anthropologists tell us about, who feel guilt and remorse at actions that do not make us guilty or remorseful at all. To take a parallel case: we might be inclined to say that the impulse to murder someone who has injured us is not a *moral* impulse at all; and that approval of such conduct is not moral approval. But it is not only logically possible, but a well-attested fact, that some men do feel guilt and remorse if they fail to commit such murders. (Perhaps even *Hamlet* may remind us of this: Hamlet's vacillation may be between two conflicting moral codes.) This is not at all unlike the fact that there may be some enactments enforced by the courts that are not in accord with natural justice.

The ordinary use of moral terms, then, may incorporate both substantive moral principles and logical principles which would apply to *any* moral principles whatsoever. But that should not lead us to ignore the very important difference between the two. The Principle of Impartiality is, I believe, a substantive moral principle: conduct which ignores it is no doubt immoral, but not non-moral. On the other hand, conduct which ignores the Principle of Consistency would usually seem to be random or arbitrary behaviour, which is excluded from the sphere of morality altogether. Even when it is not arbitrary, as with the third type of patriot, it would still seem to be caused rather than reasoned: it is apparently psychologically impossible to have a *conscious* reason for acting that ignores the Principle of Consistency. Here again, since moral appraisal applies to conscious reasons for acting, the Principle of Consistency may help to demarcate moral from non-moral behaviour. But, since most non-moral, as well as all moral behaviour, conforms to the Principle of Consistency, it is misleading to put too much stress upon this.

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SARTRE AND *LE NÉANT*

A. R. MANSER

In their rare comments on Existentialism, contemporary British philosophers, with a few notable exceptions, frequently ridicule the use of "nothing" by such writers as Sartre and Heidegger. And when it is discovered that these writers maintain that the contemplation of nothingness gives rise to anguish, this ridicule is expressed even more strongly. What may be taken as a typical example of this tendency are Professor Ayer's remarks in his *Horizon* articles on Sartre. (*Horizon*, Vol. XII, 1945, pp. 12–26 and 101–10.) A characteristic quotation runs as follows: "In particular, Sartre's reasoning on the subject of *le néant* seems to me exactly on a par with that of the King in *Alice through the Looking-Glass* . . . The point is that words like 'nothing' and 'nobody' are not used as the names of something insubstantial and mysterious; they are not used to *name* anything at all" (p. 18). The possibility that Sartre is making an elementary mistake must seem, on a moment's reflection, to be remote. We may presume that he knows how to use the French language, to understand the French equivalents of such sentences as "There is nobody in the room", or "There is nothing in the larder". To expect, as the result of hearing such remarks, that there was a peculiar entity of some sort in the room or in the larder would be to misunderstand them. After all not a very high level of sophistication is required to realize that Carroll is making a joke about the King's use of "Nobody"; we expect our children to understand this without any explanation.

The other possibility which might be considered, is that Sartre is using these words in a new, semi-technical sense. And there seems no obvious reason why a writer should not do this, providing that he gives adequate warning and a clear account of his use. The fact that such a use would not be in accord with a dictionary definition is, or ought to be, immaterial. It might, however, still be objected that the choice of a particular word as a technical term was unfortunate, on the grounds that its use was liable to *mislead* careless readers. I think this objection has some force against Sartre's use of *le néant*, for it has undoubtedly led some of his readers to think that he is talking of something mysterious and exciting, when in fact, as I hope to show below, most of what he has to say can be satisfactorily expressed in other much less exciting ways. Indeed, at times it seems that Sartre is deliberately accentuating this possible air of mystery. But to say that the use is unfortunate is not to say that it is wrong, and still less to say that it commits the error of taking

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"nothing" as the name of an object. Far too frequently contemporary philosophers extract such isolated phrases as "Le néant est néantisé" and use them as paradigms of nonsense, without making any effort to understand what part they play in the work as a whole. Throughout this article, I have left *le néant* and Sartre's verb *néantiser* in the original French. I hope this may have the effect of giving less offence to the more tender-minded linguistic analysts.

One more preliminary remark, closely connected with the last, must be made. It has become customary to refer to such works as Sarte's *L'Etre et le Néant*, with which I shall be principally concerned, as works of metaphysics. This may be satisfactory as a means of dismissing the book, but it should be noted that Sartre himself stresses that he is not attempting to deal with what have been the traditional metaphysical problems. Indeed, the subtitle of the work is "Essai d'ontologie phénoménologique". In other words, he is concerned with a phenomenological description of experience, of appearance rather than reality. It is doubtful whether he succeeds completely in giving a description of experience which is indifferent to metaphysical views—in fact it seems to me doubtful whether the claims of a "pure phenomenology", a description of experience prior to and independent of, all theory, are justifiable in principle, let alone in the actual practice of those who style themselves phenomenologists. Nevertheless, the attempt to do this has produced, in the work of Sartre, many fascinating descriptions and analyses of experience which are frequently ignored, and which alone would justify the claim of his work to serious philosophic consideration.

Sartre leads up to his discussion of *le néant* by an examination of negation. As soon as questions are asked, or, indeed, language used in any other way, negation is pre-supposed. In other words, without language, no negation, or, as Sartre prefers to say, without human beings, no negation. But reality must be positive. Sartre expresses this by saying that *l'en-soi*, objects-in-themselves, is a plenitude of being, containing no negativity. This may seem a dangerous way of expressing what he wants to say; it does lead him into making some statements which seem to be clearly false, e.g. he says (*L'Etre et le Néant*, pp. 42-3, henceforth referred to as *EN*)[1] that such words as "destruction"only apply to the world because they have reference to human interests and purposes. An object may be *altered* by a cyclone or a bomb, a house may become a pile of rubble, but considered in itself this is only a change of state. It becomes an instance of destruction because we prefer houses to piles of rubble. But to

[1] All translations from the French are my own. I have included at the end of the article a list of passages quoted from *L'Etre et le Néant* with the corresponding pages in Miss Hazel Barnes's translation. (*Being and Nothingness*. By Jean-Paul Sartre. Trans. by Hazel E. Barnes. (Methuen, 1957.))

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say that the building is *altered* by the cyclone is already to introduce
a negative term: to change is to become other than what one was
originally. It would seem that he was in danger of formulating a
type of Parmenidean argument about *l'en-soi*, making all change
impossible for it. Part of the trouble clearly lies in the impossibility of
describing the world or talking about it without using language.
But I do not want to deal with the notion of *l'en-soi* here; it is suffi-
cient to remark that it is by no means clear. Nevertheless, it does
seem legitimate to say that we can, with Sartre, accept the broad
division of the world of experience into two parts, facts (*l'en-soi*)
and conscious beings (*le pour-soi*), and state that negation is some-
thing which only attains expression in the latter. The statement
that without conscious beings there would be no negation might
almost seem a truism.

But Sartre does not content himself with this. He goes on to try
to account for the origin of negation. *Le néant* is prior to negation,
and not, as might be thought, the other way round. Nothing,
however, cannot exist; neither can it create negation (or anything
else) by its actions. Sartre expresses this by saying "le Néant ne se
néantise pas, le Néant 'est néantisé'" (*EN*, p. 58). This statement
Professor Ayer finds particularly shocking. "The confusion is then
still further increased by the attempt to endow Nothing with an
activity, the fruit of which is found in such statements as Heidegger's
'*das Nichts nichtet*' or Sartre's '*le Néant est néantisé*'. For whatever
may be the effective value of these statements, I cannot but think
that they are literally nonsensical" (Ayer, loc. cit., p. 19). It is
worth noticing that these two statements differ in one important
respect. Heidegger's is active, Sartre's passive. Sartre, indeed,
criticises Heidegger's notion of *das Nichts* on the grounds that he
makes it into some sort of object which surrounds the world and,
in a sense, creates it. For Sartre, *le néant* cannot do anything because
it is—nothing. Neither can it be a constituent of the world.

How, then, can it be the origin of negation? Sartre deals with this
problem by a contrast between two types of negation, a genuine
and a spurious (*EN*, pp. 44–6). If I enter a café looking for a friend
and finally discover that he is not there, the judgment which I
then make, "Peter is not there" has a very different feel from other
judgments similar in form which I am logically entitled to make,
e.g. "Wellington is not there", "Valéry is not there", etc. The
first judgment is based on a recognition that is independent of
language. When I enter the café and look round it, the whole scene
forms, in Sartre's words, a background which waits to organize
itself round the figure of Peter. Failing this, it remains a *mere* back-
ground which I ignore. But nothing like this can happen in the
other cases, because in no way can I be really looking for Wellington

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or Valéry in the café. The first, Sartre claims, is a genuine experience of *le néant*, the others purely formal negations. Only because there are experiences like the first can there be negative judgments. This experience *is* an experience of *le néant*, and it is in this sense that *le néant* haunts our experience. It seems most profitable to take this as a kind of "ostensive definition", or perhaps ostensive identification, of what Sartre finds to be a vital element of all human experience, and which he uses to illuminate considerably the nature of the mind and human freedom.

From this rather bare summary of the way Sartre arrives at *le néant*, I wish to turn to a more detailed analysis of his use of this concept in dealing with the problem of images, and concluding with a shorter examination of the fundamental points in his discussion of freedom. I hope that this will validate the claim that I have made that there is a great deal worth considering in the system of Sartre's thought as a whole.

Besides his major work, Sartre has written two books on the imagination, *L'Imagination* (1936) and *L'Imaginaire* (1940). In the former, he is concerned chiefly to criticize the classical philosophical and psychological accounts of the nature of the image, and in the latter in building up a theory of their nature. He also summarizes the results of these books in *L'Etre et le Néant*, in the section on the origin of negation. On most theories of imagination, the basic problem is that of distinguishing images from other forms of consciousness, such as perceptions, and in many cases, if the theories were correct, there would be no *real* difference which could be discovered. For example, for Hume the only difference between impressions and ideas lies in the force with which they strike us, so that, as Hume himself admits, faint impressions may be taken for images and strong images for impressions. The latter case would seem to be the more normal, but some psychologists have carried out experiments designed to establish that the former experience actually occurs. Of course, such a theory depends on a doctrine of representative perception, such as Hume held. On consideration, it is clear that such a theory must lead its holders to deny that there is any means of distinguishing between images and percepts; confusion is always logically possible, and, in the case of hallucinations actually occurs. The only refuge against such a doctrine has seemed to some writers to lie in the total dismissal of images as a part of our mental furniture (Cf. Ryle, *Concept of Mind*, Chapter VIII. I have discussed this aspect of the problem in P.A.S. Supp. 1956, pp. 216–22). To deny the existence of images is a heroic, but unjustifiable, course. To most people the fact of their existence is obvious, even if their nature is by no means clear.

Sartre finds that any theory of the Humean type is unacceptable,

even though it is at first sight plausible. When I report that I have an image of St. Paul's, it seems legitimate to suggest that I am doing something rather like seeing the actual building. Just as I can, when looking at it, count the number of windows on the façade, so, it seems, can I when contemplating my image. Though some of the words used in describing our imagery are different from those used in describing our perceptions, the majority are identical. This fact has seemed to some writers sufficient ground for the theory which Sartre attacks. Unless, he claims, there were a *radical* difference between image and percept, we could never be certain which we were at the moment faced with. But instances of confusion arise, if at all, only rarely. Hence there must be a difference. To show the nature of the difference it is necessary first to point out that for Sartre all images (indeed, all instances of consciousness) are *intentional*; they are images *of* something, and to describe my image, in general I report of what it is the image, e.g. "It is an image of St. Paul's" or "of a building of an ecclesiastical character", not by means of a description of the image itself. Sartre discusses, in a very interesting passage (*L'Imaginaire*, pp. 30–77) the way in which this characteristic of images is similar to that possessed by some real objects which serve similar purposes to images, e.g. photographs, portraits, caricatures, etc. We may use these in ways like the ways in which we use images, e.g. to recall more accurately the faces of absent friends. Indeed, it has often been remarked that the faces of those dearest to us are by no means necessarily the ones which we can image most accurately. But in the case of images I do not have to discover, by means of further examination, asking the owner and so on, what they are images of. Nor can I compare them with their originals in the same way. Indeed the very suggestion is senseless; whatever a mental image is, it cannot be put side by side with its original in the way in which a picture can, and it is difficult to see in what other sense we could make a comparison. This, however, is not necessary, for we do not need to learn from comparison what our images are images of. In general, the image comes with, as it were, its object's name stamped on it. "How do you know the image you claim to have of St. Paul's is *really* one of St. Paul's?" is a senseless question.

The second difference between images and percepts that Sartre stresses is that the image gives all its information in one go, whereas in the case of perception I can go on extracting further information from what I see, even coming, as a result of this process, to correct or revise my original judgment. No analogous process can take place in the case of images.

It is the third characteristic which Sartre finds in images that brings in *le néant*, though this characteristic is for him the ground

of the previous two, marking the *essential* difference between an image and a percept. "The image affirms its object as 'un néant'" (*L'Imaginaire*, pp. 23–6. cf. *EN*, p. 63). This applies equally to images of non-existent objects and to those of merely absent ones, e.g. "What is common to an image of Peter and an image of a Centaur is that they are both aspects of 'le néant' (*L'Imaginaire*, p. 231). In other words, for an image to be an image, it should not be possible, as we have seen above, for it to be mistaken for a perception, and this negative character is one which all images must possess. The character may be of two sorts, the *néantisation* of an unreal object as not existing anywhere, or the *néantisation* of an absent object as not being here. When I call to mind an image of Peter, it is not a shadow of Peter that I have in mind, it is an image of Peter "in his bodily nature, Peter whom I can see, hear or touch. Only I realize that I do not touch this Peter whom I can touch. My image of him is a certain way of not touching him, of not seeing him . . . In this sense, we can say that my image contains a certain *néant*" (*L'Imaginaire*, p. 25). However realistic an image may be, we can never bring ourselves to believe that it is really a perception. The nothingness which it contains will always bring us back to its true character. (There may seem to be difficulties at this point about hallucinations, etc. Though there is not space here to discuss the matter, it seems correct, as Sartre himself stresses, that it is by no means clear from the writings of psychologists that such experiences do have the characteristics that philosophers of perception commonly ascribe to them.)

If we try to consider the part which images play in mental life, we are driven to say that they function in a way very similar to that of words, rather than to act as *substitutes* for the objects imaged. (Of course it has been said that words are substitutes for objects!) The main difference between images and words is that words can occur in the presence of the object to which they refer, images cannot. I can't have an image of my room whilst I am looking at my room. However accurate my visual memory is, however vivid my imagery, it never competes with the objects of that imagery. But apart from this fact, the two sorts of things are not, from Sartre's point of view, vitally different. If images were just "mental pictures", produced by arbitrary associations in the conscious or unconscious mind, they would play a very different role in our mental life, and all that could be said about them could be said by experimental psychologists investigating "psychical events". But the essential characteristic of the image, as of the word, is that it points to something other than itself, just as a word does; it is not what it is and is what it is not, to use Sartre's phrase. An object, considered in itself, merely is, does not point at all. This is true of the word considered

as a mere sound or a picture considered as a pattern of shades and colours on a piece of paper, just as much as of a stone lying in the roadway (which *might* also be a sign to somebody). It is only when we consider the sound as a word, the pattern as a picture of Peter, that its significance is revealed and it takes on, so to speak, its *real* character. But this real character is not its character *as an object*. The difference between the image and the other cases here, as we have seen, lying in the fact that it seems impossible to describe the image as it is in itself, because it is in no way a real *thing*. The further point is brought out by talking in terms of *le néant* that there is no causal relationship between the image and that of which it is the image. Even if a physiologist could detect what was "in the mind", see an actual "picture in the brain", he would not thereby come to know that it was an image of Peter. (Cf. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, p. 217. "At that word we both thought of him . . . If God had looked into our minds He would not have been able to see there whom we were speaking of.")

Imagery thus provides an example of the way in which *le néant* enters into our mental life. What Sartre means by this term is further brought out by his extension of the concept to cover human consciousness and freedom, which he regards not as two separate issues but as two aspects of the same one. A being which is conscious must be free. Of course the most striking of his analyses of freedom occur in the connection with ethical or quasi-ethical themes, but here I am only concerned with the foundations on which these analyses are built. The basis fact which Sartre maintains about human consciousness is that it is radically opposed to any form of determinism. It is this which marks the difference between *l'en-soi* and the *pour-soi*, the former being the sphere of the rigidly determined, the latter both consciousness and liberty. "That which we call liberty is thus impossible to distinguish from 'human reality' itself. Man does not first exist and then become free afterwards, there is no difference at all between the being of man and his 'being-free' (être-libre)" (*EN*, p. 61).

Could a machine be conscious? In spite of a few claims to the contrary, the majority of philosophers would regard an affirmative answer to this question as nonsense, quite apart from the difficulty of determining whether the machine which was claimed to possess consciousness did possess it. Consciousness and causal determination seem absolutely opposed. And if the machine were conscious, would it be conscious that it was a machine? The difficulty here can be seen by considering what it would be like to be conscious of exactly what one was going to do, and knowing that there was no possibility of not doing it. It is impossible to imagine what it would be like for *all* my actions to be determined, though it is perhaps

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possible to imagine this in a single case. And this difficulty applies not just to action, but to all conscious mental life. "If we admit that the question is determined in the questioner by universal determinism, it ceases not only to be intelligible, but even to be conceivable" (*EN*, p. 59).

To take an example; an order cannot determine my behaviour in a causal sense. Conditioning a person in such a way that he always automatically responds to another's utterances is not the same thing as getting a person to obey commands. If I construct a machine that responds to sound waves, so that its movements can be controlled by saying "Come here" and "Stop", it would still be odd to say that the machine obeyed orders (though we might talk of its "obeying orders" in order to mark similarities with human behaviour). For in such a case, there would be many possibilities which could not arise, e.g. under no circumstances would we want to say that the machine had deliberately disobeyed an order, or failed to understand it. And it would probably also be true that the way in which we uttered the words "Come here" would be different in this case from the normal one of ordering a person to approach. (Cf. the remark of Wittgenstein (*Phil. Inv.*, § 493) "We say: 'The cock calls the hens by crowing'—but doesn't a comparison with our language lie at the bottom of this?—Doesn't it look quite different if we imagine the crowing to set the hens in motion by some kind of physical causation?") We would only call a form of words an *order* if there were some possibility of its being disobeyed.

This applies to all human thinking and behaviour, whether physical or linguistic. The latter case becomes especially clear if we look upon language as a set of *rules*, rather than response to conditioned reflexes. The fact that human beings can tell lies, as well as act or simulate, is thus not merely an epistemological difficulty, but an important feature of their being human. This Sartre holds to be further evidence of the way in which *le néant* enters into our life. In a strict causal chain, there is no room for any gaps of any kind. But human life is filled with possibilities, questions, etc. Everywhere in our life, we experience *le néant*.

Realization of the freedom and nothingness which lie at the heart of our being may give rise to "*angoisse*", anguish, but only when we contemplate possible courses of action without real intention to act. For example, I may decide now that I will get up early tomorrow morning in order to continue writing this article. But the fact that I make this decision *now* is no guarantee that when the alarm rings in the morning I shall in fact get up and continue with it. I can always change my mind at the last moment. The decision in no way binds me to carry it out when the time comes. This fact in itself need not give rise to anguish, but when

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I contemplate my situation, then I may well have this feeling. This can perhaps further be emphasized by Sartre's example of vertigo (*EN*, pp. 67-9). If I have to walk along a path by a precipice, the realization of the various hazards, such as a slip, the crumbling of the path, may well frighten me. But if I go to the edge and look down and realize that there is no reason why I should not jump over, that there is nothing to stop me and my present decision not to jump will not prevent a future change of mind, then I will feel anguish. Our freedom is, so to speak, idling on these occasions, not being used in actual behaviour. Hence there is no reason for most people to feel anguish; normally we are too concerned with our immediate actions and projects to get into the appropriate state of mind. I have mentioned this mainly to draw attention to the way in which the Sartrian *angoisse* differs from Heidegger's *Angst*. *Angoisse* arises only indirectly from *le néant*, *Angst* directly from the contemplation of the nothingness which surrounds the world of being. Hence it is more like a Pascalian dread before the immensity of the universe. It therefore seems quite legitimate to accuse Heidegger of making Nothing into a kind of thing.

I trust that this exposition has shown adequately the use which Sartre makes of *le néant*. But the matter cannot just be left as mere exposition. Two questions about the justification of this usage seem at once to arise. (1) Is it the same "quality" which occurs in images, human consciousness and freedom, and so is Sartre justified in dealing with them all by use of the same term? (2) If there is one such "quality", is it helpful to think of it as nothingness? (For, ultimately, we must drop the linguistic device of discussing this "quality" by using a technical term and face up to the fact that Sartre in using the French word *le néant* must presumably be talking of something whose name could be translated into English as "nothingness". Even though question (1) can be answered in the affirmative, it may well be that "nothingness" is a misleading term to use to describe it.)

I hope, of course, that the way in which I have expounded Sartre has already helped to answer these two questions affirmatively. Nevertheless, it may seem that, even if we admit that images do have a "negative" character about them, they may well differ from the rest of human consciousness in this very respect. There appears to be a considerable difference between my thought of an absent friend and my present thoughts whilst writing this paper. I am, while writing, conscious of a wide variety of things that are present around and within me, a certain fatigue, the sound of my pen, the room in which I am writing, etc. If I want to, I can at any moment switch my attention to them. Further, if I suddenly feel an itch or a pain, I shall have to pay attention to it whether I want to or

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not. Sartre would claim, however, that in so far as I am not attending to the furniture or to the room, they are effectively nihilated, form a mere backcloth to my activity of writing. And while writing, my fatigue is not noticed, though I may come to be conscious of it as a means of escape from the task which I have set myself; I may decide, in fact, no longer to nihilate my tiredness and say that it is so great that I must go to bed. Assuming that I am not physically exhausted, it is frequently a *decision* that I am now too tired to go on with what I am doing, an escape into bad faith. Thus there is a sense in which it is true to say that the things of which I am partially conscious are partly nihilated by the direction of attention to the task in hand. More important perhaps is the fact that it is hard to imagine anything which could be described as consciousness which did not possess the power of imagery, or at least the possibility of representing to itself absent or non-existent objects. For anything to be concious it must be able to be at some distance from the world, not entirely immersed in it. Indeed, the very possibility of using language seems to depend on some feature of this sort. A machine could not use a language. Consequently it seems legitimate to couple consciousness and imagery together, and, by the same argument, to connect them with freedom.

Finally, what grounds are there for calling this common character "nothingness"? To say that all these have "nothing" in common is, in ordinary speech, to deny that they do possess a common quality. But it is possible to make out a case for accepting "nothing", or perhaps better "nothingness", as a reasonable word to describe them. There is no quality of a mental image which marks if off *as* an image. Indeed, if there were, then the "mental picture" would, by this very character, be different from the object of which it was the image, be unfitted to function as an image. In spite of the fact that the image of a friend is the image of that person "in his bodily nature, Peter whom I can see, hear or touch", there is no danger of my confusing the image with reality, but no one character to which I can point as the reason for my ability to distinguish between them. The image itself is, or contains, a certain nothingness. And a similar argument can be applied in the case of freedom.

I have not attempted a detailed justification here, because I have been concerned mainly to indicate to British philosophers that there may be some point in talking in this way, and that it may well be worth their while to consider the philosophy of Sartre seriously. And at the present time it seems better to do this by considering points in detail, particularly those which are likely to antagonize British readers at the beginning of their study, rather than to utter vague generalities about the importance of metaphysics and illumination. Metaphysics may be like poetry, but if it is to count as philo-

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sophy it has got to fulfil other stringent requirements as well. There are many detailed points in the writings of Sartre which would well repay study. In her book on Sartre, Miss Iris Murdoch says "Some of the things which are said in the *Concept of Mind* are also said in *L'Etre et le Néant*" (Iris Murdoch, *Sartre*, p. 8). I think the comparison might more profitably be made with Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*.

List of passages referred to:—

Pages in *L'Etre et le Néant*.	Pages in *Being and Nothingness*.
pp. 42–43.	p. 8.
p. 58.	p. 22.
pp. 44–46.	pp. 9–11.
p. 63.	p. 26.
p. 61.	p. 25.
p. 59.	p. 23.
pp. 67–69.	pp. 30–32.

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OMNIPOTENCE, EVIL AND SUPERMEN

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IT has in recent years been argued, by Professors Antony Flew and J. L. Mackie,[1] that God could have created men wholly good. For, causal determinism being compatible with free will, men could have been made in such a way that, without loss of freedom, they would never have fallen (and would never fall) into sin. This if true would constitute a weighty anti-theistic argument. And yet intuitively it seems unconvincing. I wish here to uncover the roots of this intuitive suspicion.

There are in the argument two assertions to be distinguished. First, that causal determinism (i.e. the claim that all human actions are the results of prior causes) is compatible with free will.[2] I call this the Compatibility Thesis. Second, there is the assertion that God could have created men wholly good. This I shall call the Utopia Thesis. An apparent inference from the latter is that God cannot be both omnipotent and wholly good, since men are in fact wicked.

In the present discussion I shall concentrate on the Utopia Thesis. Clearly, of course, if the Compatibility Thesis is not established the Utopia Thesis loses its principal basis and becomes altogether doubtful. But I shall here merely try to show that the Utopia Thesis does not follow from the Compatibility Thesis, despite appearances. This may well indicate that there is something queer about the latter (and the Paradigm Case Argument, on which perhaps it principally rests, has lately come in for perspicacious criticisms).[3] In the discussion I shall be assuming the truth of determinism; for if it is false, the Compatibility Thesis becomes irrelevant and the Utopia Thesis totters. The chief points in my reasoning are as follows:

The concept *good* as applied to humans connects with other concepts such as *temptation, courage, generosity*, etc. These concepts have no clear application if men were built wholly good. I bring this out by a piece of anthropological fiction, i.e. (*a*) let us conjure up a universe like ours, only where men are supposed to be wholly

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[1] See Antony Flew "Divine Omnipotence and Human Freedom" in *New Essays in Philosophical Theology* (London, 1955), Ch. VIII, and J. L. Mackie "Evil and Omnipotence", *Mind*, Vol. LXIV, No. 254 (April 1955).

[2] See Flew, op. cit., p. 151.

[3] See the article "Farewell to the Paradigm-Case Argument" by J. W. N. Watkins, and Flew's comment, and Watkins's reply to the comment, all in *Analysis* 18. 2 (December 1957), and the articles by R. Harré and H. G. Alexander in *Analysis* 18. 4 (March 1958) and 18. 5 (April 1958) respectively.

good; or (b) let us consider the possibility of Utopian universes quite unlike ours. Under (a), I try to show that it is unclear whether the "men" in such a universe are to be called wholly good or even good, and that it is unclear whether they should be called men. And under (b), I try to show that we have even stronger reasons for saying that these things are unclear. Thus the abstract possibility that men might have been created wholly good has no clearly assignable content. Hence, it is rational to be quite agnostic about such a possibility. It follows that it will be quite unclear whether a Utopian universe will be superior (in respect of moral goodness) to ours. So the Utopia Thesis cannot constitute an anti-theistic argument.

<div align="center">I</div>

When we say that a man is good we are liable to render an account of why we say this, by giving reasons. For example, it might be because he has been heroic in resisting temptations, courageous in the face of difficulties, generous to his friends, etc. Thus *good* normally connects with concepts like *courage* and so forth.

Let us look first at *temptation*. It is clear (at least on the determinist assumption) that if two identical twins were in otherwise similar situations but where one has a temptation not to do what is right, while no such temptation is presented to the other twin, and other things being equal, the tempted twin will be less likely to do what is right than the untempted one. It is this fact that temptations are empirically discovered to affect conduct that doubtless makes it relevant to consider them when appraising character and encouraging virtue. Moreover, unless we were built in a certain way there would be no temptations: for example, unless we were built so that sexual gratification is normally very pleasant there would be no serious temptations to commit adultery, etc. It would appear then that the only way to ensure that people were wholly good would be to build them in such a way that they were never tempted or only tempted to a negligible extent. True, there are two other peculiar possibilities, which I shall go on to deal with, namely (a) through lucky combination of circumstances men might never sin; (b) frequent miraculous intervention might keep them on the straight and narrow path. However, for the moment, I consider the main possibility, that to ensure that *all* men were *always* good, men would have to possess a built-in resistance to all temptations.

Similar remarks apply to courage, generosity, etc., although in some cases the situation may be rather complex. It will, I think, be conceded that we credit people with courage on such grounds as that they have faced adverse situations with calm and disregard for danger. But the adversities arise because there are fears, desires

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for comfort, disinclinations to offend people, and so on. And it will be generally agreed, at least by determinists, that one twin faced with a situation where doing right inspires fear will be less likely to do what is right than the other twin not so faced with adversity, and similarly with regard to desires for comfort and so forth. Thus to ensure that men would never panic, never wilt, etc., it would be necessary, as the main possibility, to build them differently.

Perhaps generosity is a trickier case. But it is clear that a person is praised for generosity because very often there is a conflict of generosity and self-interest. Indeed, if there were not some such conflict, or thought to be, however remote, an action would not really count as generosity, perhaps; the slight qualification here is due to the possibility of situations where a person has so much money, say, that it makes no psychological difference whether he gives away a certain sum or not, but he does it out of sympathy—I shall deal with such cases below. And to say that generosity conflicts with self-interest is a short-hand way of saying that one's inclinations for comfort, etc., are liable to have a more restricted fulfilment than would otherwise be the case.

Then there are actions which exhibit such dispositions as pride, which seem remote from simple inclinations such as likings for certain sorts of food or for sexual gratification and from fairly simple impulses such as fear. But though the springs of pride are hard to fathom, it is doubtless true that people would not display pride, in the ordinary sense, if they did not live in a socially competitive atmosphere, if they did not have desires to assert themselves, etc. One would not be sure quite how men would have to be rebuilt to immunize them from pride, but rebuilding would surely be necessary, on the determinist view.

As for the peculiar cases mentioned above—generosity not involving sacrifice and similar examples—I do not think that such instances are at all serious ones, inasmuch as (*a*) virtues are dispositions, and so there is a point in calling such non-sacrificial generosity generosity, in that it exhibits a disposition whose basic exercise involves sacrifice; (*b*) without the occasions for basic exercise of the disposition it is obscure as to what could be meant by calling the non-basic instances of generosity instances of generosity.

These examples, then, are meant to indicate that the concept *goodness* is applied to beings of a certain sort, beings who are liable to temptations, possess inclinations, have fears, tend to assert themselves and so forth; and that if they were to be immunized from evil they would have to be built in a different way. But it soon becomes apparent that to rebuild them would mean that the ascription of goodness would become unintelligible, for the reasons why men are called good and bad have a connection with human nature

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as it is empirically discovered to be. Moral utterance is embedded in the cosmic status quo.

II

Of course, God is not bound by synthetic necessities: He is in no way shackled by the causal laws of our universe, for example. But in a back-handed way, He is confined by meaninglessness. For to say that God might do such-and-such where the "such-and-such" is meaningless or completely obscure is not to assert that God can *do* anything. I therefore hope to show that "God might have created men wholly good" is without intelligible content, and hence that this alleged possibility has no force as an anti-theistic argument.

"God might have created men wholly good" *appears* to have content because at least it does not seem self-contradictory and because we think we can imagine such a situation. But I shall bring out its emptiness by in fact trying to do this, by imagining other possible universes. Now it may well be objected that in doing this I am showing nothing. For example, one will be wanting to make imaginative causal inferences like "If men are never to panic they must be built in such-and-such a way". But since God is not bound by causal principles the inferences have no legitimacy.

But this objection misses the point of my procedure. For my argument is based on the following dilemma. *Either* we can hope to assign a reasonably clear meaning to the possibility that men might have been created wholly good by imagining a Utopia—in which case the paradox arises that it would be quite unclear as to whether such "men" could reasonably be called wholly good. *Or* we can refuse to assign such a reasonably clear meaning to the possibility by simply postulating an unimaginable alternative universe—in which case there are even stronger reasons for doubting whether the possibility has content. Or, to make the matter *ad hominem* as against Flew, I am saying that alleged possibilities as well as alleged facts can die the Death by a Thousand Qualifications.

I proceed then to imagine possible universes. In line with the above dilemma, I divide such universes into two classes. First, those which are cosmomorphic, i.e. those which are governed by physical laws at least roughly comparable to those found in our cosmos. Second, I consider non-cosmomorphic universes, i.e. ones with a quite different set-up from ours.

(a) *Cosmomorphic Utopia A.*—The first and main type of cosmomorphic utopia, where men are wholly good, can be described perhaps as follows, in line with the earlier remarks about temptation, etc.

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Men will never be seriously tempted to harm or injure each other. For this reason: that no one has any serious desires liable to conflict with those of others. For instance, they would be so built that one and only one woman would attract any one man and conversely. Say: one would have an overriding infatuation for the first uninfatuated woman one met and vice versa. As for property: men might arrive in the world with an automatic supply of necessities and comforts, and the individual would have a built-in mechanism to ensure that the supplies of others were mysteriously distasteful (the other man's passion-fruit smells like dung). And what of danger? During, say, a thunderstorm no one would be so seriously perturbed that he would be likely to panic and harm others. Let us suppose that a signal would (so to speak) flash in the individual's brain, telling him to take cover. What if he was in the middle of an *al fresco* dinner? Perhaps the signal flashing would dry up the juices in his mouth. And so forth. (Admittedly this picture is not elaborated with much scientific expertize: of this I shall say more later.)

I think that none of the usual reasons for calling men good would apply in such a Utopia. Consider one of these harmless beings. He is wholly good, you say? Really? Has he been courageous? No, you reply, not exactly, for such creatures do not feel fear. Then he is generous to his friends perhaps? Not precisely, you respond, for there is no question of his being ungenerous. Has he resisted temptations? No, not really, for there are no temptations (nothing you could really *call* temptations). Then why call them good? Well, you say, these creatures never harm each other. . . . Yes, but the inhabitants of Alpha Centauri never harm *us*. Ah, you reply, Centaurians do not harm us because there are as yet no ways for them to impinge upon us. Quite so, I say; it is causally impossible for them to harm us. Similarly the set-up of the Cosmomorphic Utopians makes it causally impossible for them to harm each other. The fact that it is distance in the one case and inner structure in the other makes no odds.

Now admittedly in such a conversation we are not brought face to face with the Death by a Thousand Qualifications in the form described by Flew in regard to such statements as "God loves His children". For there the criticism of the theologian is that when counter-evidence is presented he takes refuge in increasingly recondite senses of "love". But in the present case one who claims that the inhabitants of Cosmomorphic Utopia A are wholly good is not precisely resisting counter-evidence (that is, he is not resisting evidence that these creatures are not good and so possibly bad). Rather he is failing to give the usual reasons for calling them bad. And the positive moves are up to him. It is not sufficient airily and vaguely to say that in such an alternative universe men can be said to be wholly good. Similarly the traveller from Jupiter who tells us

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that unicorns are to be found there, though queer unicorns for they possess neither horns nor feet, leaves us at a justifiable loss.

Hence it is so far obscure as to what is meant by the possibility that men might have been created wholly good. For the usual criteria, at least in Cosmomorphic Utopia A, do not seem to apply. And so, even if the Compatibility Thesis is correct, it does not appear so far evident that men might have been created wholly good. For an unintelligible assertion cannot either be said to follow or not to follow from some other. And in any case, are the Utopians described above properly to be called *men*? Perhaps we ought to invent a new name: let us dub them "sapients". The question for the theist now becomes: "Why did God create men rather than sapients?" I shall return to this question later.

(b) *Cosmomorphic Utopia B.*—Circumstances here combine always to make men good. Adolf Hitler would never in fact be foul. He might have incipient impulses of hatred towards Jews, but these would luckily never overwhelm him, because circumstances would prevent this: he would fall in love with a Jewess, he would never get into anti-Semitic company, he would not meet with miseries in his youth, and so forth. Whenever on the point of falling for some temptation, his attention would be distracted. The whole thing would be a very, very long story. And everyone, not just the Führer, would be consistently lucky with regard to virtue and vice.

The trouble about this Utopia is that it is more like a dream than a fantasy. A corresponding meteorological dream would be: since circumstances occasionally combine to make the sun shine, let us suppose that the sky would never be overcast. This does not seem self-contradictory, to say "The sky might never be overcast". But what would a cosmomorphic universe have to be like for this to happen? Clearly it is not just luck that makes the sun shine sometimes: it is because the weather operates in a certain way. For the weather so to operate that it was never cloudy meteorological laws would have to be rewritten (and physics and biology too)—unless you are thinking of a place like the moon. Similarly, in a cosmomorphic utopia where circumstances for ever combined in favour of virtue, the set-up would, according to the determinist, have to be different. Thus Cosmomorphic Utopia B is either a version of A (or of some other) or it is a mere dream masquerading as an alternative universe.

(c) *Cosmomorphic Utopia C.*—Suppose men were always virtuous, not because of the set-up (which would be as now) but because of frequent miraculous intervention.

It is hard to make sense of the supposition. But observationally in such a world we might discover situations like this. Causal factors

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C usually give rise to actions of a certain empirical type, type-A. But in some circumstances type-A actions are wrong, and in these cases C will not have type-A effects. But it will not be that some other empirical factor will be present in such exceptions, for *ex hypothesi* the non-occurrence of the type-A action is due to miraculous intervention. Hence either we have to count rightness and wrongness as empirical differences in order to formulate a causal law here or we must confess that no strict causal laws of human behaviour could be formulated in this cosmos. The former alternative is baffling and unacceptable, while the latter is incompatible with determinism. Hence Cosmomorphic Utopia C provides no support for the Utopia Thesis.

(*d*) I now turn to the thought of a *Non-Cosmomorphic Utopia.* As has been insisted, God is not limited to a cosmomorphic alternative. My anthropological fictions are feeble in comparison with the possibilities contained in God's thoughts. He might have produced a cosmos utterly unlike ours.

But as we have no notion what sapients in such a world would be like, it is even unclearer in this case what would be meant by calling them good. We would have to remain completely agnostic about such a world; and all the difficulties there are in knowing what is meant by calling God a person and good would recur with *extra* force when we try to understand what "wholly good men" could mean here. *Extra* force, because whereas God's nature is perhaps revealed to a limited extent in the *actual* cosmos, the nature of an alternative *possible* and *non-cosmomorphic* universe can in no way be so revealed. Hence it follows that it is totally unclear what the possibility that God might have created a non-cosmomorphic utopia amounts to.

It is therefore also unclear as to whether it would be superior to this universe. Moreover, it is most doubtful as to whether the sapients of Cosmomorphic Utopia A are superior to ourselves. I am not sure, of course, how one judges such matters; but if we rely on native wit, in default of some new method of evaluating alternative universes, it seems by no means clear that such a utopia is a better place than ours here.

III

It may be complained that I have been unfair. My anthropological fiction has been crude and possibly biassed. And the thing has not been worked out with any scientific expertize. But no one, so far as I know, with the requisite physiological, psychological and biological knowledge has attempted to work out such a fictional alternative anthropology, doubtless there are enough problems in the real-life biological sciences without our going off into subtle fantasies. But until someone were to do so, it remains obscure as to what a determinist cosmomorphic utopia would amount to.

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Again it may be objected that writers have occasionally dreamed of utopias and described them. Surely these descriptions are not empty or self-contradictory? But first, fictions are no good guide unless systematically elaborated. For example, and notoriously, there are situations in science fiction which are revealed on reflection to be unintelligible or self-contradictory (e.g. in regard to "going back in time"). Again, fiction writers may not have any clearly formulated views about determinism. And it might turn out that what is allowable on a hard free will theory is not so on a determinist view. For example, an indeterminist may simply say that it might have been the case that men were always wholly good. But the determinist can only make sense of this possibility on the assumption that wholly good men would have a causal difference from men as they are. In order to imagine a man's always overcoming his harmful inclinations, he must surely imagine some change in the way his personality is built. But we have no assurance that some *unspecified* causal change would leave men more or less human and yet produce the consequence of complete goodness. Hence the change has to be specified. I have tried out a plausible fiction or two here, to show that so far one can assign no clear content to the possibility of men's being built wholly good. But maybe some determinist will dream up a plausible fantasy to establish his point. But let him do so: for so far the Utopia Thesis is wrapped in cloud.

Again it might be argued, from the side of theism, that this discussion works against angels just as much as it works against the possibility of wholly good men. If we cannot make sense of non-cosmomorphic worlds we cannot make sense of angelic worlds. Maybe so: though angels, *qua* messengers of God, could share in the intelligibility of God. But that takes us too far afield.

Conclusion.—My anthropological fiction seems to bring out the point that moral discourse is embedded in the cosmic status quo (or even more narrowly, in the planetary status quo). For it is applied to a situation where men are beings of a certain sort. Thus the abstract possibility that men might have been created wholly good loses its clarity as soon as we begin to imagine alternative possible universes. If then the Utopia Thesis is quite unclear, it cannot assert anything intelligible about God. And so it cannot serve as part of an anti-theistic argument. There remains of course many serious difficulties for the theist in regard to human evil. But the Utopia Thesis is not one of them.

Or not yet. We shall see how the science fiction goes.

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BELIEFS AND ATTRIBUTES[1]

GERSHON WEILER

In a philosophical paper the point one wishes to make should be stated at the very outset. And in dealing with a problem which is as controversial as religion, the bias should be confessed before any points are made. I want to conform at once to both these requirements. I want to discuss beliefs, ordinary beliefs but mainly religious ones, for the expression of which, oddly enough, we use the same word. "Belief" and "Faith" are admittedly different in English, but many languages possess only one word for these and further I shall try to show that even in English the difference is not very great and that they have, if not the same, at least a very similar logical grammar. The point of my argument is that beliefs can be discussed rationally and that they should be so discussed. Religious arguments have been going on for a very long time, and I find it incredible that people of immense intellectual qualities, who devoted their time and energy to these discussions, have been working under a simple delusion, not understanding the very nature of the thing they were doing. I cannot believe that theology is one great mistake, even if we admit that the whole structure hangs on a hook, which demands a non-rational justification. People who argue for religion wanted to say something true, which they believed can be proved true. Also I find it odd, to say the least, that some philosophers say that to believe in the religious sense of the word is to be fond of telling certain specified stories in a certain earnest tone of voice and though these stories commit us to a way of life they do not commit us to the truth of the stories themselves. I imagine that some people who are sincere believers must find this a shocking description of their state of mind. Some great religions have endeavoured to prove their case rationally and I shall attempt in this paper to take them as seriously as I can. This is where my bias comes into play. I think I have reason to believe that religious arguments in the past have not been futile but extremely useful. Though I am no believer, I still believe that arguments about religion in the past have brought about a considerable change in people's beliefs.

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The very question "what constitutes a *religious* problem or argument" has been always determined by factors which were not wholly religious, i.e. by the whole outlook of the age. Historically speaking, many of the disputes we should take for scientific or political ones, were religious disputes in their time. Was the issue between Galileo and Cardinal Bellarmine a scientific or a religious one? One could say that religious arguments have, among others, the extremely important function of delimiting the field of the religious itself.

The thoughts I am presenting here are rather sketchy. The main limitation of the paper is that it implicitly commits the same mistake as most recent discussions about religion commit. I mean the habit of arguing about the meaning of the sentence "I believe in God" and to take this as exhausting the range of religious attitudes. At least I want to say very clearly, that I know that much more has to be said. (Added in proof) Walter Kaufmann's *Philosophy and the Critique of Religion* and Ninian Smart's *Reasons and Faiths* which appeared since this paper was completed, are important contributions in just this respect. I should like these thoughts to be taken not as a comprehensive account of a full-scale battle but as a reconnaissance report compiled on the basis of patrol-warfare on the borders. The interior of the land remains unexplored.

I shall argue that all statements of the type "I believe in . . . " entail at least one statement of the sort "I believe that . . . ". Further, statements of the second type can be rationally discussed, i.e. even if they cannot be conclusively established or refuted by experience, yet experience is highly relevant to their truth-value. That this is how religious philosophers of the past understood the matter, will be another point. This line of argument, I hope, will cut the ground from under very much recent talk, which through using up-to-date analytic methods, tries to save *via* proofs of meaningfulness the truth of theological statements. I feel that these recent attempts, though very illuminating, are hardly better than any other expression of intellectual discomfort, and the person who has least reason to welcome these manipulations with religious language is the believer (or the traditional theologian) who is defended in this sort of way. He might well say: "God protect me from my friends, I shall somehow manage my enemies." But, as Mr. Mitchell so frankly puts it in the Introduction to his collection of essays, *Faith and Logic*, the "objector" or "critic", who is argued against in the papers collected in that volume, is nobody but the writer's analytic ego, who struggles with his religious ego. All this seems to come dangerously near to the revival of the "double-truth" theory, in a more sophisticated, post-Wittgensteinian form. It is not by chance that the Church condemned the doctrine about the

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"double-truth" and disliked the "triumph of faith" achieved at the expense of leaving all rational arguments to philosophy. Believers today should feel as embarrassed by this ally as the Church then felt about its predecessor. And philosophers should not forget that Leibniz opened his *Theodicy* with an attack on the "double-truth" doctrine, presupposed by the triumph of faith over reason. I propose to take a rather roundabout route before I come back to talk about this view. But I hope that after this historical detour much of what has to be said will hardly need saying.

II

If I say "I believe in God", I use the word "God" as a proper name. It is hardly necessary to recapitulate the radical changes which have occurred in our logical notion of proper names. It is a long, and well-known way from Mill, who allotted denotation but not connotation to proper names, to Mr. Strawson, who executed the last surviving member, the logically proper name, of that once great family. That we know on what occasions to use a proper name, or the word "this" for that matter, shows that we know something about that which is being referred to, i.e. some description was concealed in the name. The fact that these descriptions were concealed and were not straightaway specifiable gave rise to theories of proper names, which today are recognized as fallacious. Mr. Searle in *Mind* 1958 has brought out very clearly how it comes about that concerning a certain name we might entertain a host of propositions, then deny some which we affirmed before or vice versa, without having the feeling that we had changed the meaning of the name. As Wittgenstein said in *Philosophical Investigations*, § 79, "I use the name *N* without a fixed meaning", i.e. if one or more of the propositions which I believed about *N* to be true turn out to be false, I can fall back upon other propositions, but if I reject all propositions about *N*, then I have no use any more for that name: it is turned into a mere noise.

One feels inclined to say that only the post-Wittgensteinian account of proper names has enabled us to see what lurked behind the endless arguments of the Middle Ages concerning God and His attributes. But, while it is true to say that this account allows us a greater insight, it is certainly untrue to say that the medievals did not themselves see the import of the problem. The question was: which attributes can be truly predicated of God? Or in alternative form: if nothing is predicated of God, is the word "God" still a word, or is it not a mere noise?

I shall say something about the attempt of Maimonides (and partly of Aquinas) to deal with this question, but in a systematic

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and not historical manner. I mean that I shall discard as much as I can of the Aristotelian terminology, in which these arguments were formulated.

Also, it is worth pointing out that our discussion is that of mono-theistic language, and the arguments used by these philosophers are valid, if at all, only if monotheism is taken for granted. One wonders, whether polytheism which would naturally escape many of their most cogent arguments, could not be made more sense of. If there are many gods, their names would be ordinary proper names, i.e. exhibit the same logical behaviour as "John" or "England", yet be objects of religious worship. Aquinas says (*S.T.I.*, Q. 13, Art. 10) that the name "God" is applied to idols on the basis of analogy with God to whom only this name belongs properly speaking—and this is clearly unsatisfactory. Contemporary philosophers who are engaged in analytico-religious apologetics rightly act on the principle "clarification begins at home",—but it would be a mistake to regard even a very good analysis of Christian religious language as a valid analysis of religious language in general.

One of the most interesting efforts to make sense of monotheistic language was made by Maimonides in his *Guide of the Perplexed*. I shall try to show that this effort was not successful, and I hope that it will be obvious that the moral to be drawn from his failure is still relevant to present-day discussions about religion.

Maimonides' position can be best understood if we begin by taking account of the presuppositions he made. I take these to be three:

(1) The oneness (the uniqueness) of God.
(2) Aristotelian logic and theory of science

<div align="center">and</div>

(3) the truth of the Bible.

I shall claim that these three, if taken with all they imply, are inconsistent. But first I should like to say something, very briefly, about each of these points.

(1) If God is unique then He has to have a unique name. By "unique name" I do not mean a proper name but rather something like Russell's logically proper name ("this"). Now the obvious candidate for this role would be the Tetragrammaton which was traditionally supposed to have no predicates inherent in it. Maimonides says that the word has no significance and blunders into adding that perhaps originally it conveyed the meaning of "absolute existence". That the Tetragrammaton is inadequate was rightly remarked on by Aquinas " . . . if the name were given to signify God not as to His nature, but as to His *suppositum* accor-dingly as He is considered as *this something*, that name would be

absolutely incommunicable, as for instance the Tetragrammaton among the Hebrews, and this is like giving a name to the sun as signifying this individual thing" (*S.T.I.*, Q. 13, Art. 9). Aquinas's meaning is quite clear: in order to specify something it is not sufficient to point to it but one has to be able to say what sort of thing is being pointed at.

Consequently we have to search for a better name, i.e. for a name which is communicable. A name is communicable if something can be predicated of it. If we affix a predicate to a subject then the statement either states that something is the case, i.e. this thing has this property *qua accidens* or the statement is analytic and it is an explication of the subject, the predicate being necessarily contained in it. The first possibility is ruled out because it would entail that there is something accidental in God and that His nature is not absolutely one and simple. The second possibility, that of tautology (I. 51) would be permissible, prima facie, as it would state the essence and be an explication of the name only. But there is another objection to it. A tautology, in order to be understandable, must presuppose something as given; if we define a triangle as a certain figure in which such-and-such relations hold between angles and sides, the angles and sides must already be given. But nothing can be given prior to God, His predicates cannot precede Him and it is in terms of these that He should be defined if he could be defined at all. " . . . we use 'one' in reference to God to express that there is nothing similar to Him".

We can see here already that Maimonides will be forced to hold a position according to which "God" both is and is not a proper name.

(2) The adherence of Maimonides to Aristotelian logic and theory of science was the source of some further difficulties. According to Aristotle scientific statements are universal and affirmative; the Aristotelian substance is an individual thing *belonging to a class*. His logic is a logic geared to the purpose of expressing class subsumptions.

Now there are obvious difficulties in applying this model to God. We saw that predication of God, whether in analytic or scientific statements, is well-nigh impossible. The inconsistency between presuppositions (1) and (2) already shows itself. Maimonides, realizing this, could have reverted to silence as he seems to have been inclined to do when he quoted with approval the Psalm's "Silence is praise to Thee". But he could not take this way out because he accepted presupposition (3).

(3) The Bible enumerated certain attributes of God, and Maimonides had to take account of them. The predicates of the Bible were

straightforward: "Merciful, patient, etc." Maimonides quotes the Talmudic saying that "the Torah spoke in human language", which means: in a language not adequate enough from a philosophical point of view. The Bible's predicates are human predicates and consequently they have to be explained away. Maimonides' doctrine of homonyms serves this purpose; his claim is that between, e.g., the application of "just" to God and man, there is nothing in common but the word. The weakness of this position is obvious. In the case of ordinary homonyms we learn the meanings of both words independently of each other, but what we have here is nothing but a sense transferred from the human realm to the divine. The choice of predicates for God has been made with an eye on human predicates. Maimonides both wants and does not want to retain this association. If he eliminates the connection between the two, then divine predicates become meaningless; if he upholds the connection then divine predicates become anthropomorphic.

But this is only part of his trouble. What about the status of statements about God? Presupposition (2) demanded of him that he should make universal affirmative statements. This proved impossible. To find a way out of this impasse he introduced his celebrated doctrine of negative attributes. Negative attributes should be understood here in the sense of complete exclusion, i.e. in the sense of *negatio* and not in the sense of *privatio*. The statement that "the wall does not see" denies something of the wall which does not belong to its nature and is thus negative, while "John does not see" denies something of John which belongs to his nature as a man, and is thus *privatio*.

To say that a wall does not see is a truism and at most can warn us not to commit a category-mistake. According to Maimonides, all affirmative statements about God commit a category-mistake and the function of the negative statements, into which he translates all the predications found in the Bible, is to warn us not to commit that mistake. He claims that all true negative statements about God serve the purpose of guiding the mind to the truths which we must believe about God. Yet he insists that negative predication, in accordance with presupposition (2), is not proper predication, i.e. no number of true negations will help us to understand God in His very essence. Further, a rather paradoxical consequence of this doctrine is that anything can be negated of God with the same logical justification.

We saw that in order that a name should be meaningful some predicates must be attached to it. Maimonides' doctrine of predication, proved to be inconsistent with the implication that for him "God" both is and is not a proper name. If one takes his doctrine of homonyms and negative predicates seriously, the conclusion one

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is forced to is that "God" is not a name at all and is consequently meaningless. The appearance of meaningfulness is retained through the use of homonymous predicates with their ineradicable human associations; but if we make real efforts to get rid of these associations then at most we have created another universe of discourse which we do not know what it is about.

So we have failed to fix the reference of "God", because the presuppositions adopted were inconsistent. The Tetragrammaton, our first candidate, is meaningless in itself and if any meaning is attached to it this is due only to the fact that we are told that it refers to the same being as other names of God. And unless one is willing to treat "God" as a class name,[1] i.e. drop presupposition (1), the reference of "God" cannot be fixed.

Some of Maimonides' presuppositions seem to have been accepted by Aquinas. Without claiming to understand all the subtleties of the *Summa*, I would venture to say the same objection is valid.

Aquinas attempted to escape these difficulties by regarding the Divine predicates as *analogous to* human predicates. He thus tries to steer a middle course between the view that predicates are attached to God univocally and the view (i.e. the one we have considered) that they are attached equivocally. Univocal predication would have meant anthropomorphism, equivocal predication would have meant agnosticism, which is entailed by the doctrine of complete ineffability.

But Aquinas' analogy-conception of God's predicates fails for the reason that the notion of "analogy" itself, in the present context, is used analogically. What I mean is this: There is a perfectly good sense of "analogy", in which for example I am entitled to say that situation x is analogous to situation y, provided they are similar in some specifiable respects (and dissimilar in certain others). The necessary and sufficient conditions for my being able *to say* this meaningfully are not exhausted by the similarity obtaining, but only by the fulfilment of the additional condition that I should have knowledge by acquaintance of both x and y. It might be objected that I am setting a condition which is very rarely satisfied even in the case of our more ordinary pieces of knowledge. It might

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[1] This suggestion was made by Miss Anscombe when I read this paper in Oxford. If polytheism were our universe of discourse, then this theory would be absolutely adequate. But I fail to see how one could maintain it in a monotheistic context unless one was also willing to say that it is a mere accident that there is only one god and not more. Should we claim that it is necessary that there is only one God, i.e. His uniqueness belongs to his essence, then we should have to incorporate the specification of the range of application in the list of class-defining characteristics. It is one thing to say that extension is determined by intension and quite another that the extension is stated explicitly in the intension.

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be said, and justly, that the greater part of our knowledge is knowledge by description. Yet, while this seems perfectly true, I would claim that it does not constitute a case against my argument, for the following reasons: (1) It is obvious that when I say that an analogy obtains between x and y, then I have knowledge of x and of y independently of each other. If all I claim to know about y is that it is analogous to x in some respects, then what I am providing as a description of y is nothing but a modified description of x, as I am unable to give the criteria (as I have no knowledge by acquaintance) by which the description of x should be modified *just so* and not otherwise. The case is that of a transition from one description to claiming that it is another description where this transition is unwarranted. (2) The present case presents an additional difficulty. In the case I considered just now, I took it for granted that the meanings of the terms remained unchanged and I tried to show that, even in this case, it is illegitimate to claim that an analogy obtains if there is no reason for supposing y to be what it is supposed to be, beyond the claim that it is analogous to x. But in the present case the analogous character of the *terms* involved is claimed. Even in cases of knowledge by description, the terms of description have been learnt on acquaintance and not through description. I have learnt how to understand a statement to the effect that an object I have not yet seen, or will never see, is red by being confronted with red objects previously, and having learnt the necessary and sufficient conditions for something's being red, the meaning of "red" remaining constant. If the analogy-argument is correct, I should be able to say whether an unseen object is red from having determined the colour of a pillar-box under my window. But this is patently false. If it is predicated of God that He is Good analogically then it is pointless to say that the analogy works *as* from "good house", to "good man", or to "good work" or what you please, because we have some knowledge of any of these items *independently* of each other apart from their goodness. But to say that anything is predicated of God analogically entails that there must be at least one thing which is not so predicated, otherwise the reference of the analogous predicates cannot be fixed. But I cannot see what sense can be given to the statement that *all* predicates of God are analogical. If all His predicates are analogical, how can we ever be sure that they are *His* predicates?

If what I have said is so far correct, then we can conclude that no proper account has been given of analogy, and from a logical point of view analogy is not better off than Maimonides' homonyms, for the simple reason that both these attempts at predication fail to provide the reference of the predicates.

If it is true that all predication about God has to be taken

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figuratively or as homonymous, then there is no logical reason why we should not increase the number of predicates as much as we fancy, and whenever one of the predicates we produce is challenged, we can always reply (almost in the exact words of Maimonides): "Ah, but you should not take it literally. As a matter of fact there is nothing in common between the ordinary and divine sense of the same-sounding word, but the name." So, this doctrine lands us in a logical jungle. Nor does it seem to me that Aquinas helps us very much when he says that the predication represents the divine substance in an imperfect manner. What "imperfect" stands for, seems to be nothing more than the admission that we do not know God's nature. When Aquinas ends the 8th Article (Q. 13) with saying: "Thus the name *God* signifies the divine nature, for this name was imposed to signify something existing above all things, the principle of all things, and removed from all things; for those who name God intend to signify all this"—we feel that he has switched to another language.

III

I should like to suggest that although the doctrine of ineffability is to be found intermingled with the views I have discussed so far, yet it is a logical consequence of the difficulties these views contain. In order to give meaning to "God" we have to attach predicates to it. But the only predicates we have, are human predicates and this fact landed us in a muddle. Yet, the God who is believed in has to have some predicates, otherwise there will be nothing to believe. The ineffability of God was offered as an escape-route from the difficulties we encountered. Human predicates break down when employed in connection with God and now a new set of predicates is introduced, the content of which is that ordinary predication is out of place here. I do not think much harm can come from labelling these "second-order-negative predicates", for the sake of familiarity.

Maimonides himself quotes with approval Psalm lxv. 2 "Silence is praise to Thee" and adds: "It is a very expressive remark on this subject, for whatever we utter with the intention of extolling and praising Him, contains something that cannot be applied to God and includes derogatory expressions; therefore silence and intellectual reflection are more becoming" (I. 59). The negative predicates of Maimonides may be interpreted as the first step towards the ineffability doctrine, which came to maturity with the ascendence of Latin, as in Hebrew they cannot be constructed so elegantly.

The Fourth Lateran Council declared: "We firmly believe . . . that there is only one true, Eternal, immense, immutable, incomprehensible,

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omnipotent and ineffable God, the Father and Son and Holy Ghost.''
That this new set of predicates has this double role of serving
as a predicate and negating all predicability is expressed concisely
by Stace (*Time & Eternity*, pp. 48–9) thus: " . . . that He is,
in His very nature unconceptualizable, that His Mystery and
incomprehensibility are absolute attributes of Him.'' Mr. Alston, in
The Philosophical Review (October 1956) has shown, how expressions
like "unconceptualizable", "ineffable", etc., were generated from the
illegitimate extension of the meanings of words like "unbeatable",
"unspeakable", etc. The latter have a legitimate use in certain
specified circumstances, but their extensions leave behind them all
specifications and qualifications and their range of application
becomes so universal that we do not know what their application
is. We could say that for the use of predicates like "ineffable"
syntactical but not semantical rules were given. We know what
their position in the sentence should be, but we do not know what
subject or subjects they should be attached to. In order to know
this, we have to know some other predicates about the subject,
which say something about its nature. But if "God" is the subject
of predicates of the ineffable-set only, how can we ever be sure
even of their being attached to the *same* subject? Predicates generally
serve to point out certain characteristics, which we choose to pick.
But it is more than odd to pick on the characteristic that no charac-
teristic can be picked out. If we say of a man that he is "nondescript",
we do not characterize him, rather we say that he is perfectly
ordinary, average, etc., and he is hard to describe, and this is why
no police-inspector would think that he has done a proper job if he
has put up a poster saying "Wanted, a nondescript person, suspected
of murder". If we wonder what an un-birthday present is, we
wonder because we are in the habit of picking on birthdays and not
on un-birthdays. Yet, we know what a birthday is and what a
present is, and our half-way understanding of the expression "un-
birthday present" is due to the fact that "present" remained
undisturbed by the oddity of affixing "un-birthday" to it. But in
the case of God there is nothing to fall back upon. If we want to
know who or what is the subject to which the predicate "ineffable"
is attached, it will help us precious little if we add that it is the
same which is also "unconceptualizable", "immutable" and "incom-
municable".

But we should not forget that the ineffability-doctrine is a logical
escape-device. The predicates of the ineffable-set did not supersede
all others. Predicates like "good", "just" are used simultaneously
with predicates of the ineffable-set. According to Aquinas "just"
is predicated of God analogically literally, whereas "angry" only
metaphorically, the reason being that "angry" implies imperfection.

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But this further implies that "perfection" itself is both a predicate and a rule for the application of further predicates. Having discussed ineffability, we hardly need to stop to point out that "perfection" or "perfect" are predicates which have a perfectly good use in certain specified contexts, but if the limitations imposed by the context are removed, they slip into the ineffable-set. A "perfect x" is perfect *qua* an x, and we have to have some further knowledge about the nature of x, in order to be able to judge it an x at all or a perfect specimen of its sort. One feels like saying here that a subject of which all the perfections and only perfections are predicated, is really incomprehensible. ("The perfections of God are those of our souls, but He possesses them in a boundless measure" —Leibniz.)

I have tried to show, so far, that as "God", syntactically at least, is a proper name, any meaningful discourse in which it occurs necessitates predication. I have argued that the homonyms of Maimonides, the analogies of Aquinas, the doctrines of ineffability and perfection—all suffer from some serious logical defect. All these attempts try, in one way or another, to satisfy the requirements of predication while escaping it. I did not imply that statements about God are meaningless, only that whenever such statements are made, their meaning should be specified. The demonstration of the breakdown of the traditional doctrines was not intended to prove more than: (1) that theologians intended their statements to be meaningful and were at pains to prove them to be so and that (2) the meaningfulness of God-statements should not be taken for granted without further scrutiny. This, indeed, is the starting point of a rational discussion, for which this paper is a plea. I shall elaborate on this in the next, and last, section.

IV

I turn, at last, to the discussion of beliefs or more exactly the nature of statements "I believe in X" or "I believe that p". The importance of predicates, which have occupied us so far, is too obvious in this context to need elaborating. "I believe in Bigo" does not reveal very much. "Bigo" is not an English word nor the name of anyone I know. Consequently my saying that I believe in Bigo is saying nothing, the sentence has no application. In order that my saying that I believe in God should be meaningful, "God" has to be more specified than "Bigo". This is where predicates come in. But once they are in, our statements can be transformed into "I believe that God . . . ". If I say meaningfully "I believe in God" then my saying so entails at least one statement of the "I believe that . . . " sort.

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What is the advantage of this transformation? What do we gain by asking the believer to translate his statement of belief into the "that"-form? One advantage would be that we would come face to face with the predicate or predicates which were concealed in the subject. The "that" phrase brings it out. There are predicates of the "just-set" and the "ineffable-set", and I do not wish to say that these two sets are either mutually exclusive or jointly exhaustive. There might be others, which I have not discussed. But whatever logical type the predicates belong to, the "that"–phrase would bring it out. Suppose someone says "I believe that God is beyond comprehension". We can ask "What else do you believe about Him"? If he says "nothing else", then we shall have a good mind to say to that person: "You do not believe anything at all." Or let us take a dispositional predicate like "just". If someone believes that God is just then he expects certain types of events to take place or alternatively he will shape his notion of justice in such a way that it should be in accordance with the events. It should not be unduly worrying that the person who believes in God's justice cannot give a definite list of expected future events, as the cash value of his belief. In order that his statement should be meaningful, it should allow that it should be contrasted with something. So, if he takes the second alternative I mentioned, then any event might be in line with this belief in divine justice, but this position would require him to take the position according to which there is nothing in common between divine justice and human justice, and we saw already where all this takes us.

Maimonides defines "faith" or "belief" as the conviction which comes after the apprehension, and which consists in the conviction "that the thing apprehended has its existence beyond the mind exactly as it is conceived in the mind" (I. 50). But here some clearing up has to be done. Much is made of the distinction between "faith" and "belief". Dr. Waismann argued that it is sensible to say that I believe in Maxwell's equations but I cannot have faith in them. But can't I? In certain specified contexts, in extreme situations in which very much is at stake, it might be quite natural to say so. Can any criterion be given which sorts out the cases in which the one word is applicable but not the other? I do not think so. Apart from that it is an accidental fact about the English language that there are two words. Neither Hebrew nor German makes the distinction. According to the definition given by Maimonides the distinction cannot be made. But it is doubtful whether a distinction is desirable at all. It is interesting to talk about faith only because it is a case of belief and beliefs can be justified or unjustified. If we restrict the meaning of "faith" to "Confidence, reliance, trust" (Sh.O.E.D.) as a state of mind not

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involving any belief in the truth of any proposition, then (provided the restriction of meaning could be carried out), the discussion of it would be quite pointless. My state of mind of being in love offers no occasion for argument, but the question "will she make a good wife?" does.

By now it will be apparent how old-fashioned my arguments are and that so is my whole approach. I want to prevent the believer from having recourse to the subterfuge of the irrational. Of course, I do not wish to say that there is no irrational element in religion. Not only religion but our every-day life, our ordinary language included, is irrational in some respects. But the very fact that the believer tries to make converts shows that there is also a rational element in it.

And the whole history of theology shows that the believer does want to say something rational. Nothing is said unless it is said in an understandable way. There are no beliefs without attributes and attributes are part of our ordinary language. Nobody could deny this and remain consistent, without also implying the possibility of private language. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that some mystics thought so, but their beliefs, if they still qualify for the name, could not become doctrines. There is no religion without communication. Aquinas, among the many arguments he uses against Rabbi Moyses' (i.e. Maimonides) negative doctrines, says that negations in themselves will not do as negations are understood only on the basis of affirmations and if we did not know something about God positively, we could not deny anything about Him either. And against the view that all predicates attached to God are used only in the secondary sense, he argues that this view " . . . is against the intentions of those who speak of God" (S.T., Q. 13, Art. 2). The point of Aquinas and of the present paper is that religious language though partially allegorical, figurative, etc., defeats its own ends if it is wholly so. Otherwise no argument will be possible and in the absence of the possibility of an argument there is no room for truth and falsity. And I cannot help regarding it as a very poor evasion of the issue, if it be replied that "truth" itself is to be understood here in a special sense. There are special senses only on the background of non-special ones, with which they retain some considerable similarity of logical behaviour.

It might seem that while I am at pains to assert that religious language, notably statements expressing beliefs, cannot have a meaning which is totally different from the ordinary, I commit the other mistake in making these statements altogether identical with statements of ordinary discourse. I hope that this position does not necessarily follow from my argument. If it were true that belief-statements are like ordinary factual statements, then it would

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be also true, or so at least it seems at first sight, that their truth or falsity could be conclusively settled. The notoriously non-conclusive character of religious arguments might well be mainly responsible for the view that they do not involve truth and falsity in the ordinary sense. But how then can we make sense of the assertion that religious arguments or statements of belief are to be understood, at least partially, in their near-ordinary or ordinary sense and yet we cannot settle conclusively their truth or falsity? I think this puzzle can be resolved. It owes its life to the all-too-dogmatic conception of the nature of ordinary discourse, which holds that statements about fact are decidable. In order to see how mistaken this view is, we need not even go into an analysis of the notion of "fact". The view in question breaks down on the most unsophisticated account of fact. Is the dispute about the Budget between the Tories and Labour decidable? If not, why not? It will not at all do to say that the factual statements they make in debating are *really* disguised evaluative statements. If that were the case, we could have great fun watching how they expose each other's disguised evaluations; there might be even some jobs for philosophy graduates, trained in exposing, at both Party headquarters. Is the issue about the H-bomb decidable? Is a legal argument, which is perhaps a paradigm case of a rational argument, not decided, in the last resort, on the basis of the hierarchy of courts of law, a fact completely irrelevant to the particular case which is being judged upon? Or, to speak more *pro domo*, is the Israeli-Arab issue decidable?

It might be argued that they are not decidable because they are matters of policy or commitments to a certain policy. And it might be argued that as religion involves a commitment, no argument about the truths of religion can be conclusive. It seems, on this possible view, that I do commit myself to a policy and stick to it, no matter what is the case. If this view is correct then the irrationalist could prove his case with the help of my examples. But, fortunately, it is not correct.

We have learnt from that admirable symposium on *Falsification* in the Flew-MacIntyre volume, that no definite number of events necessitates the falsity of a religious belief. But this does not at all mean that events are not relevant to the question of truth and falsity of these beliefs. Suppose that more and more facts will be produced against a certain policy. It is quite possible that none of these facts, when stated, will entail the falsity of the pre-suppositions underlying the policy in question. Yet, if the number of unfavourable facts is increasing, the policy will be slowly abandoned. Some diehards will continue to say their piece and derive intellectual comfort from the fact that while doing this they are not contra-dicting themselves. But that will hardly help the policy to success.

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And in fact, religious beliefs behave historically in a way similar to policies. There are, of course, differences as, e.g., the fact that in policies I generally want something or achieve something, while this does not seem to hold in all, though admittedly it does in some, cases of religious belief. But it behaves like a policy in being a species of a kind of rational argument. Religious beliefs have been abandoned when arguments in a sufficiently large number were produced against them. They were not abandoned from a logical necessity, but because it seemed reasonable to do so. It would not be self-contradictory to adhere to a discredited belief, but unreasonable. How was the belief in Hell abandoned? Not through proving that it is a conclusion which does not follow from some accepted premises, but rather through coming to think that, in view of other things we know or believe, it is unlikely to be true. In fact, that some philosophers took refuge in the other-language or double-truth theory in connection with the nature of religious discourse (the view I have tried to combat), is due to some rational arguments which these philosophers found it unreasonable to reject.

Philosophy and religion used to be thought to be incompatible. They were competing in the same line of business, i.e. the drawing up of a total world-picture. Professor Ryle describes how "the fires of philosophical theology and anti-theology were already burning low by the last decade or two of nineteenth century", and how they were out in the twenties. But if philosophers lost their interest in religion in the hey-day of Logical Atomism, they have regained it in the present day. And philosophy never became an indifferent affair for the religious. Documents like the *Humani generis* show quite clearly that the Roman Church, for example, is of the opinion that certain modern doctrines *contradict* the doctrines of the Church.

Philosophers still feel uncomfortable about metaphysics, though they are willing to allow that there might be something in it. And even on the current minimum-notion of metaphysics, as a "new way of looking at the world", it should be seen that philosophy and religion cannot meet in brotherly embrace on the bosom of Mother Analysis. Religion is a way of looking at the world too, and we cannot look from two points of view simultaneously. What I have tried to say is that we can look at religion from the point of view of analytic philosophy, but this should not be interpreted as its acceptance, as indeed they are incompatible.

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THE *SYNTHETIC A PRIORI*— SOME CONSIDERATIONS

DAYA KRISHNA

MOST thinkers, today, seem agreed about the untenability of the *synthetic a priori*. That there can be no propositions about matters of fact which possess a logical necessity about them, seems beyond all dispute. Recent studies in the nature of logic and the analysis of empirical propositions seem to have established this beyond all doubt. But those who have no doubt in the matter do not seem to see that something they hold to be equally obviously true is completely incompatible with it. The purpose of this paper is to focus attention upon something which has necessarily to be denied by anyone who wants to deny the *synthetic a priori*. In other words, I want to point out what I consider to be the essence of the *synthetic a priori* and suggest that unless one is prepared to deny it, one cannot deny the *synthetic a priori*.

The issue of the *synthetic a priori* is concerned primarily with the question whether there are any necessary relations among matters of fact. A denial of the *synthetic a priori* is, thus, the denial that there are any necessary relations between any facts whatsoever. Now, it is commonly conceded by everybody that propositions designating facts can be *necessarily* related to each other. In fact, the hypothetico-deductive-verificational method of science in its usual formulation presupposes this. A hypothesis, in order to be verified, has certain consequences drawn from itself in terms of certain possible sense-experiences. If the consequences are found to be the same or similar to those that are expected, the hypothesis is said to be confirmed. If they are different, the hypothesis is given up as inadequate or false. The relation between the hypothesis and the consequences is supposed to be necessary, for unless it was conceived to be such no necessity would be felt for revising the hypothesis when the conclusion was false.

The relation between the premises and the conclusion is the prototype of all necessary relation. Unless, therefore, we are prepared to assert that from empirical propositions designating matters of fact no conclusion can be drawn, we would have to admit necessary relations between some sort of facts and certain others. If all facts were contingent not merely in themselves but in their relation to each other, then no argument concerning facts would be possible, for the form of an argument is always of the nature of "if . . . then", i.e. if something is accepted, then something else has to be accepted also and if something is false then something else has to be false also. The usual Humean argument that all relations between facts are logically contingent should lead to the conclusion that even if the fact designated by the conclusion were not to be the case, the

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fact or facts designated by the premiss or premisses could be the case. This, obviously, is hardly accepted by anybody. The whole logic of verification or even confirmation tacitly depends upon the denial of this conclusion which seems necessarily to follow from the Humean argument concerning the logical contingency of all relations between matters of fact.

The difficulty may be sought to be met by pointing out a confusion in what I have been trying to say. It may be suggested that "relations between propositions" should not be confused with "relations between facts". Just as a proposition may have certain properties without the facts designated by the proposition having that property also, so a proposition may be related to other propositions without the facts designated by those propositions having that relation also. The proposition "Grass is green", for example, can be true or false without the green grass being true or false. Similarly, the two propositions "Francine is taller than Shail" and "Shail is taller than Sujata" together necessarily imply the third proposition "Francine is taller than Sujata" without, in any way, involving a necessary relation between the facts designated by the propositions concerned. It may be contended that the property of "logical necessity", like the other property of "truth" belongs *only* to propositions (i.e. the analytic ones) or to relations between propositions and not to facts in themselves or in their relations to one another.

The analogy with the "truth"-predicate, on which this objection seeks to base itself, will be difficult to sustain if closely examined. The truth of a proposition or a sentence is determined by the state of affairs designated by it. In the well-known formulation of Tarski, the sentence "Snow is white" is true, if, and only if, snow is white. It would follow on this analogy that the relations between propositions (i.e. the premisses and the conclusion) will be logically necessary if, and only if, the state of affairs designated by them actually obtains in fact. Contrary to this, however, no one seems to believe that the *necessary* relation between propositions has got anything to do with facts. To put it in another way, logical necessity is supposed to be a *syntactical* notion by those who take truth to be essentially *semantic* in character. By treating the notion of "logical necessity" as semantic on the analogy of the notion of "truth", the objection concedes in substance far more than most philosophers who deny the *synthetic a priori* will be prepared to concede.

In fact, the generally accepted position among philosophers seems to be that propositions may be logically coherent, i.e. necessarily related to each other without being factually true. "Being necessarily related" does not entail "being factually true", though "being factually true" is supposed to entail at least "being not logically incoherent". No one, as far as I know, maintains that two propositions can be factually true and yet be logically incoherent, though almost everyone maintains that two propositions can be logically coherent without being factually true. "Not being logically incoherent" does not mean in the case of propositions designating matters of fact "being logically coherent", i.e. being neces-

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sarily derivable from each other.[1] The propositions may be factually true without being necessarily derivable from each other or from any other set or sets of propositions.

The analogy of "logical necessity" as a characteristic of relation between propositions and "truth" as a property of propositions will, thus, have to give up an essential point with respect to that which makes them true or logically necessary. "Logical necessity" would be an intrinsic property of the relation between propositions while "truth" would be their extrinsic property in the sense that it will not depend solely on the nature of the propositions themselves. This would, in effect, reduce itself to the usual distinction between analytic and synthetic judgments or between syntactic and semantic properties of propositions with which we started. The point, then, remains as to why the logical relations between propositions are so intimately and inextricably involved with what may be called the "truth-relations" between propositions. Why are they not completely independent? Why, in other words, if a conclusion is false and if the derivation is logically necessary, should the premises be false also? Why can it not be possible, to put our point in the strongest possible manner, for the conclusion to be false and the premises true or vice versa? What is the reason that makes everyone think otherwise? And, last of all, what is involved in this belief which almost everyone seems to share with everyone else?

The only way in which such a belief and such a practice can even possibly be justified is by an appeal to the implicit assumption that facts have a logical structure which, whatever may be their specific nature, they can never violate. This assumption is so opposed to the whole atmosphere in which contemporary philosophy breathes that it would seem impossible to make anyone accept it. And I am not interested in making anyone accept it. What, to me, is of more interest is to show that such an assumption is foundational to the belief that pervades the thinking of anyone who thinks about matters of fact. I am not saying that no significant thinking about matters of fact is possible without this foundation, but rather that "significant thinking" will have to be conceived in a very different manner from the way it is usually conceived by most thinkers who think about these matters.

The point that the relation between premisses and conclusion is also, in some way, a relation between the facts designated by them may be objected to in another manner. The premises, it may be said, may not designate facts at all. In the traditional syllogism, for example, in what sense can the universal proposition be said to designate facts? "All men are mortal" includes non-existent men who have not yet been born and men who have ceased to exist. If facts are ineradicably individual, what could possibly be *designated* by propositions which are not singular in their nature? If facts are inevitably those which are present, i.e. actual, what happens to propositions which are about the past or the future?

[1] This, it should be noted, is a strange situation which normally does not obtain in pure logic. It resembles the case argued for by Gödel where a well-formed formula can always arise in a system which can neither be logically coherent nor logically incoherent within the system.

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Do class names designate facts? If not, what happens to all the class-propositions which occur in so many arguments about matters of fact? If, on the other hand, we accept that class names do designate facts, what about the nth order classes whose members are not individuals but classes of the order $n-1$? Thus, even ordinary declarative sentences may not in all cases designate facts as many have usually supposed.

Similarly, compound propositions formed by connectives raise the question whether the connectives are purely formal in character or whether they do designate any *actual* relation between the facts designated by the elementary propositions concerned. In the compound proposition "If the metal is heated, then it will expand", the connective "if, then" seems to designate an actual relation between "the heating of the metal" and "its expansion". On the other hand in such a compound proposition as "if Socrates is a pig, then I am a fool" no actual relation seems to be designated by the connective "if, then". Even if, following Charles Morris, the logical operators are interpreted as behavioural it does not follow that they designate actual relations between matters of fact. Rather, they designate what may be called "behaviour-expectancies" with respect to the facts designated by the constituent elementary propositions.

The point, of course, is not so simple as that. Why should "behaviour-expectancies" not be regarded as facts? They do designate mental attitudes which can certainly be verified by the usual technique of observing behaviour over a period of time. The connectives, in such cases, may be taken to designate psychological rather than physical facts. But psychological facts are facts all right. In another interpretation, they may be regarded as rules that prescribe what is to be done with respect to the propositions concerned and not as designating any state of affairs, whether physical or psychological in its nature.

The question whether universal propositions, class-propositions and compound propositions may be said to designate facts is complicated and depends for its answer on the prior discussion "what is a fact?" I feel, however, that a settlement of this issue is neither necessary nor relevant to the point I wish to make. If once it is conceded that the conclusion cannot be false without the premisses being false and that the notions of truth and falsity are essentially semantic in character and that the relation between the premisses and the conclusion is one of logical necessity, it seems clear to me that the necessary relation between the falsity of the conclusion and the falsity of the premisses must be both necessary and semantic in character. To be both necessary and semantic is the essence of the *synthetic a priori* and, thus, anyone who concedes the three points made above must concede the *synthetic a priori* also.

The *synthetic a priori*, I suggest, can only be denied by those who are prepared to assert that a conclusion can be false and the premisses true; that there is no *necessary* derivation of one empirical proposition from another; that just as logic has got nothing to do with facts, facts have got nothing to do with logic. These assertions are far more radical than most deniers of the *synthetic a priori* will be prepared to make. But

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unless these assertions are made the *synthetic a priori*, I think, cannot be denied.

It may be urged that the assertions I consider necessary for the denial of the *synthetic a priori* are impossible in their nature and that, if conceded, they will make all scientific investigation untenable. I do not think so. In fact, I have tried to argue otherwise.[1] But here I am only interested in showing what is involved in the denial of the *synthetic a priori*. Those who consider the conditions for its denial impossible must accept it as an inevitable presupposition of human understanding and thought as Kant did. Or they must do some far more radical rethinking about the exact nature of understanding and argument about empirical matters of fact than they seem to have done until now. In either case, what is needed is an awareness of the issue and that is all I am interested in focusing attention upon in this paper.

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[1] See *The Nature of Philosophy*. Chapters III and IV, *Law of Contradiction and Empirical Reality. Mind*, April 1957 and *Types of Coherence, The Philosophical Quarterly*, Scotland. July 1960.

INTUITIONS AND OBJECTIVITY

W. D. JOSKE

In his *Ethics*, P. H. Nowell-Smith attempts to show that moral intuitionism is an impossible doctrine, which is self-contradictory and incapable of carrying out the tasks required of it, for "The concession to subjectivism which is . . . involved in representing moral experience as the awareness of a datum is fatal to the attempt to treat moral qualities or 'phenomena' as objective" (p. 51).[1] He argues that talk about objectivity is fruitless if we cannot apply standard tests or routines to determine the real nature of things, and that such tests require the presence of two conditions. First, we must agree upon the observations which would strengthen or weaken a claim that something really has, as distinct from seems to have, a certain quality, and, secondly, the tests or observations which we accept must give a high degree of agreement in their application over a wide field.

Nowell-Smith contends that if moral experience is construed according to the intuitionist model these conditions will not be found, so that the contrast between the subjective and the objective becomes pointless. For, if we can only appeal to each person's individual sense in order to find out whether or not something possesses a certain moral property, and if equally good men can form conflicting judgments of the goodness or rightness of an action, we can never know whom of those appealed to

[1] *Ethics*. By P. H. NOWELL-SMITH (Penguin Books. 1954). Particularly Chapter 4.

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are really good men or "normal observers". Even if we could find a panel of good men, the disagreements that would arise between them are of so fundamental a nature that they make a mockery of the intuitionist's analogy between moral and empirical discourse, and "The parallel case would be that in which a number of scientists failed to agree about the reading of a scale or a meter or about the colour of an object" (p. 58). He concludes that the intuitionists "use the language of 'really is', but the test that they apply to discover whether something is really right or wrong is the test of immediate insight, which is analogous to the test for 'looks' and 'feels' " (p. 58).

Some examples will show that Nowell-Smith has exaggerated the degree of agreement which a test must yield if it is to be used as a means of determining that something really is, and does not just seem to be.

It is generally admitted that bats emit high pitched squeaks which are audible to only a minority of people, and on the basis of the reports of this minority it is conceded that bats really utter a cry. The evidence of the majority was here given less weight than that of a minority, whose hearing was not necessarily better, that is more acute or sensitive to pitch, than the hearing of the majority.

There are people who can distinguish between a sugar solution and a saccharine solution, although to others these solutions are indistinguishable; and a solution of phenyl-thio-carbamide can be tasted by some, while others cannot distinguish it from water. In both these cases, in spite of a lack of agreement over the evidence, we are forced to say that the solutions which can be distinguished from each other do not really taste the same.

A final example connected with the sense of colour. During the war, some men who had lost their ears were given artificial replacements made of rubber. These artificial ears could be distinguished from normal ears, but only by colour blind men. Because these men, who can hardly be called normal observers, could distinguish them, it was concluded that the artificial ears did not really look like normal ears.

These examples show that the conditions which must obtain before we can sensibly contrast the objective with the subjective are not nearly as restricted as Nowell-Smith makes out. The rigid conditions he has suggested seem to obtain if we are talking about determinate properties, but not if we are talking about the existence of an object or about determinables. We are not, unless we are phenomenalists, prepared to reduce all talk about reality to talk about what the normal observer would perceive under standard conditions.

Nowell-Smith has, I think, shown that the traditional presentation of intuitionism in the language of moral properties is misleading, and that the analogy between moral terms and property words is dangerous if pushed too far.[1] We must, however, bear in mind that the intuitionists

[1] I do not think that a consideration of the logical grammar of the paradigm cases of property words can do more than show that the property analogy is misleading. Toulmin's anti-objectivist argument (*Reason in Ethics*, Chapter 2) falls down because it assumes that the question "Is X a property word?" admits of a definite answer. His own examples have shown that there are different sorts of property words, that the notion of a property is vague.

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used property language in order to underline their rejection of Hume's belief that "Vice and virtue . . . may be compared to sounds, colours, heat and cold, which according to modern philosophy, are not qualities in objects but perceptions in the mind" (*Treatise*, Book III, Pt. 1, Sec. 1). The point of the property analogy was thus expressly to exclude the view that the truth or falsity of moral statements was dependent wholly upon the attitudes or conventions of men. They brought to morals the logic of metaphysical realism. For Nowell-Smith, "This is really so and so" *means* "This conforms to the accepted tests", but the intuitionists construed their tests as techniques for the discovery of truths over and above the tests themselves.

If the intuitionist restates his theory, avoiding the traditional property language, he can provide us with sufficient contrast to lend point to the notion of objectivity. As against Nowell-Smith, I think we do allow the evidence of other people to count against our own moral convictions; a general belief that we are odd and morally misguided should make us hesitate before acting. In addition, evidence of partiality, showing that our beliefs can plausibly be explained as consequences of our upbringing or of our own special interests, should be permitted to count against the worth of our opinions. The standards of objectivity which an intuitionist can construct are certainly not as rigid as the standards we use for determining the reality of a determinate property, but nor were those which enabled us to say that bats really uttered a cry, or that the artificial ears really looked different from normal ears.

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AESTHETICS AND ABSTRACT PAINTING
TWO VIEWS

A. WHITTICK

In Professor Ronald W. Hepburn's most interesting examination of the theories of Reid, MacCallum and Etienne Gilson on abstract and representational painting these two forms of painting are placed in some kind of opposition. Both MacCallum and Gilson appear to think of them as different in kind, yet would not an examination of the methods of painters, both representational and so-called abstract, rather tend to show that the difference is a matter of degree? Professor Hepburn would seem to agree that this is the position when he says that "in the case of 'abstracts' whatever the artist intends, we shall still see in his paintings the hints of natural objects", although it is not quite certain that that is a main conclusion. He would appear to admit an absolute music if not abstract painting in the same sense, yet it might be possible to show that purely absolute music is just as fallacious as purely abstract painting. Yet Professor Hepburn claims that MacCallum's and Gilson's main concepts are both equally indispensable to an adequate account of painting. I would suggest that they are both a little too remote from the real nature of painting for this claim to be substantiated.

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MacCallum insists on the representational element while Gilson suggests that abstract painting is the true creative art. "There is no point in adding to reality images of natural beings", says Gilson, "which, precisely because they are but its images, add nothing to reality. What really matters is to turn out, not an image, but a thing; not to add an image to reality, but a reality to reality". The crux of the matter, however, is Professor Hepburn's citation of MacCallum's rejection of painting as " 'first of all' both a likeness and a design", as fence sitting and as logically objectionable. But it might be suggested that it is both, not at once, but in succession. In the process of making a painting it is often first of all a likeness and secondly a design by which it is in some degree transformed; but in the process of the aesthetic appreciation of that painting it is often the reverse and is first of all a design —a coloured shape—and then perhaps a likeness.

How does the artist of abstract pictures work and how has he evolved? Consider the example of Kandinsky, one of the early pioneers of abstract painting, or of the abstract phases of Picasso and Braque. They all began as representational painters, and, as they evolve, the objects of the natural world are gradually transformed by design, until they are partially recognized, and then not recognized at all, because they have been completely transformed by design. In the early still-life groups of Picasso and Braque one can see musical instruments, jugs, fruit, and so on. As design becomes more insistent the objects become merged, are partially recognized, and then in some later examples they cease to be recognized. To those familiar with the earlier examples the representational elements are sometimes discernible in the so-called abstract paintings, which to others are completely abstract.

A good example is provided by the paintings of Edward Wadsworth. He painted a series of pictures of shells and shipping tackle on a jetty. The first pictures were fairly close to the scene as normally perceived; then the scale relations of the objects began to change and the objects were ultimately so transformed by design as to become to percipients, who made no reference to the earlier pictures, completely abstract pictures. They were abstractions from natural and other forms of what the painter wanted, but they did not really cease to be representational.

When MacCallum states that painting merely impoverishes itself if it eliminates all reference to nature, the question must be asked, does painting ever do this? If it does where are the examples, for it can be suggested that if that reference is not apparent to the percipient the painter himself is very conscious of it. When MacCallum speaks of cutting out reference to nature in abstract paintings is he not assuming something that cannot really be done?

It should be acknowledged, however, that Gilson would seem to hold the view that it can be done, and when he says that the painter creates new reality by abstract art, this must not be confused with abstract art which is achieved by schematic process of transforming natural forms. Gilson reinforces his view with a quotation from R. V. Gindertael's "L'Art 'abstract': Nouvelle situation", who says that abstract art is a kind of art that "has attained to an act of creation set free by its very decision to renounce, in both spirit and will, the representation or interpretation of the forms of nature".

It may be contended that some painting—action painting is an example— that appears to be non-volitional, rather like doodling with a paint brush, there can be no representational element as the painting is rather the result of accident. It is outside the scope of this discussion if such work has no aesthetic value for anybody, but if it has there is always the question of the

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extent to which the unconscious would draw on the natural world. The fundamental question is: can a painter begin a design in a void? Is it not imperative that he should have a subject for his design? After all can he think without images or symbols of images?

A very pertinent question in this discussion of abstract and representational painting is on what does the aesthetic value primarily depend, on the expression in which recognizable objects and their associations make a fundamental contribution, or purely formed pattern as in "abstract" painting. We thus come back to painting as "both a likeness and a design". Both play a part, but the fundamental without which the existence of aesthetic value is questionable, is the purely formal pattern, and it is irrelevant whether the painting is fully representational or completely abstract. It is the colour pattern, the linear rhythm, the design in a rectangle seen in the abstract as it were, that makes, say, Rubens' "Rape of the Sabine Women" a beautiful painting that has been admired for generations; and an abstract picture by Braque derived from a still life is admired for the same reason. The association of the colour, rhythms and design with men and women doing something, or with fruit may evoke an emotional response and thus enhances the value of the picture for us. This enhancement varies a great deal, it may not be great in a still-life group, it is considerable in a Rembrandt portrait.

Gilson's view that the farther the painter gets away from copying nature's appearances, the more radically creative he is, is really irrelevant because creation depends on what one does with the material whatever it is, apart from the degree of representation. It is hardly in accordance with experience of painting that the degree of creativeness varies inversely with the degree of representation. To suggest that Tintoretto, Michelangelo, El Greco and William Blake who all included a considerable degree of representation in their work were less creative than modern abstract artists, even of the kind imagined by Ginderstael, is to make a claim that it would be difficult to substantiate.

In conclusion I would suggest that the opposition of representational and abstract painting is not a valid one, and that to stress such opposition is to depart from the real nature of visual art. Is it not really a question of differences of degree, which are essentially the same in kind?

THE LOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC IMPLICATIONS OF PRECOGNITION, ASSUMING THIS TO BE ESTABLISHED STATISTICALLY FROM THE WORK OF CARD-GUESSING SUBJECTS[1]

L. C. ROBERTSON

BEFORE proceeding to the implications in the assumption that precognition has been established statistically from the work of card-guessing subjects, it may be remarked that in this context the use of the term *guessing* as a correlate of precognition is unfortunate, for it seems to slur over the psychological distinction between mere guessing and actual

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foreknowledge. However, this point need not be pressed since the assumption we are asked to start with is the proved possibility of the precognition of the order in which sequences of cards will be drawn, the precognizer not being in a position to manipulate the cards in any way, and not having any data of any sort from which rational inferences pointing to the results of the draws could be made. If the truth of such experimental paranormal phenomena be accepted what are its logical or scientific implications? Perhaps none of any relevance to the present discussion, for it may quite simply be a brute empirical fact that paranormal precognition is confined to the restricted field of card sequences. But this would surely be to adopt too uncompromisingly rigid an attitude. Logically we are entitled to take a further step. In the absence of facts pointing to the necessary restriction of such phenomena to so narrow a field it is legitimate from the card-guessing experiments to infer the possibility of precognition of future events in general. This extension of the field is justified too by the enormous mass of data furnished by the records of well-authenticated cases of precognitive phenomena in ordinary life. In fact, as we know, it is this impressive recorded history of such spontaneous cases which led to the "card-guessing" experiments specially devised in order to bring pre-cognitive phenomena under scientific control.

Accepting, then, the evidence for paranormal precognitive phenomena without restriction to any particular field of events, what follows? It is here that some, even among those professionally engaged in the study of para-psychology, are apt to jump to hasty conclusions. Professor Rhine, for instance, in *The Reach of the Mind*, says with a touch of emotionalism unusual in scientific writings, that "if precognition is or could be 100 per cent accurate, the knowledge of that fact would so profoundly affect our philosophy of life that one shudders at the implications". He is referring here to the popular notion that absolute precognizability implies a completely determined order of events, leaving no room for freedom of choice. We have only to call to mind Origen's famous saying: "God's prescience is not the cause of things future, but their being future is the cause of God's prescience that they will be," to realize that it is not a matter of simple logic that complete precognizability implies a mechanistically determined closed system fatal to all freedom of choice. There can be no doubt, however, that with the acceptance of the evidence for precognition must come a considerable reconstruction of scientific cosmology. The phenomena of precognition undoubtedly clash with certain "basic limiting principles of ordinary thought" as Professor Broad calls them. The chief of these, perhaps, is the principle of the priority in time of the cause to its effect. The most important implications of paranormal precognition are those bearing on the notions of freewill (a misleading term), causality, and time. These implications are, of course, not logically independent of each other, for both the freewill and the causal problems, even apart from the paradoxes introduced by precognition, are intimately connected with the basic question of time and temporal perception, and cannot be discussed without reference to it.

It is only briefly that I propose to touch on the bearing of precognition on freewill, and in doing so I shall by-pass all discussion of the highly

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controversial problem of determinism and indeterminism, and quite simply assume the fact of freedom of choice. It is often argued that if one could precognize a certain disastrous event in one's life, then one could, assuming volitional freedom, prevent it from happening. The obvious fallacy here, of course, is that if one could intervene to prevent the occurrence of the disaster, and actually succeeded in doing so, that disastrous event would not be an event in one's life, and therefore the so-called precognition of it not a precognition at all. This raises the question whether there could be a true cognition by anyone of a future disastrous event in his own life. Assuming the person concerned to be normally constituted in that he would naturally seek to avoid disasters of any kind, and assuming, too, that he believed in the truth of the precognition, the answer is that he could have such a precognition if the disastrous occurrence were to take place in spite of precautions taken but occurred in unforeseeable circumstances that is, in an unprecognized way. In other words there could not be a full precognition by anyone of all the circumstances leading up to a disastrous occurrence in his life, including the precautions taken by him to avoid it. It does not follow from this that the really free acts in anyone's life cannot be precognized by him, for there is no apparent reason why a person should not be able to precognize future events in his life of such a nature that the precognition of them would not cause him to try to prevent them from happening, even by way of an experiment to ascertain whether he could intervene. And, of course there is nothing illogical in A being able to precognize future free acts of B, provided he could not interfere with them or cause B to do so. Though not to be inferred from any of the card-guessing experiments, it would not be out of place to mention here certain quasi-precognitive phenomena, for precognition is not restricted to future events that actually occur precisely as precognized, but also to events that are subsequently recognized as having been definitely possible in certain situations the main features of which are veridically precognized. I refer here to paranormally foreseen potentialities of disasters and to premonitions in general, and I speak of them as quasi-precognitive since they are concerned in part with future events which did not occur though they could have occurred in the circumstances so far as they were precognitively revealed.

Since in paranormal precognition we are confronted with the seeming paradox of effect preceding cause, it is obvious that drastic changes are called for in the current scientific notion of causation, in which lies a deep-rooted prejudice in favour of the belief in the cause necessarily preceding what we regard as its effect. Precognitive phenomena clearly imply some mode of causation independent of the time-order, or possibly, some revolutionary alternative principle to that of causality awaiting discovery and formulation by some genius of the calibre of a Newton or an Einstein.

One of the difficulties raised in the popular mind by non-inferential precognition is that it seems to involve a belief in the direct awareness of what, being still in the future, is regarded as non-existent. How can one perceive what does not exist? This is the form taken by the objection. But the difficulty is due to an obvious misconception, and vanishes with the realization of the fact that what is immediately prehended is not the future

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events themselves. In precognition the present perception or awareness is merely of contemporary images referable in thought to the future. This explanation, however, leaves untouched the crucial point that the real causes of such contemporarily prehended images and of the beliefs based on them are in the future, and therefore, no more existent *now* than are events in the past which are merely remembered. Attempts to get over this impasse serve to bring to light the deeper implications of the precognitive situation. The evidence for paranormal precognition necessitates a revision of the ordinary view of temporal perception and that of time itself. But we are not in possession of sufficient data, and lack the necessary insight to frame a new concept of time in the light of which the startling facts of paranormal precognition may be satisfactorily explained. Several tentative hypotheses have been put forward, the essential feature in all being the abandonment of the notion of a one-dimensional time. Professor C. D. Broad has, with his usual logical persuasiveness, set forth a theory in which in order to explain precognition he ascribes a second dimension to time. Professor H. H. Price, no less acute a thinker, though at many points critical of Professor Broad's theory, does not reject it as untenable. He, however, prefers the explanation of precognition to be given in terms of telepathy and not in terms of memory traces. Since it falls outside the scope of this short essay to enter into the *modus operandi* of precognition, its object being merely to indicate the implications emerging from its acceptance as a fact, there is no need to discuss the merits of the arguments employed by Professors Price and Broad. Nor is it necessary to make more than a passing reference to Mr. Dunne's well-known theory of Serialism, framed by him for the explanation of veridical foreseeing. Dunne, as we know, spatialized time as a moving line, and in order to be able to view the motion of his linear field objectively, was driven to the postulate of a second time dimension, and so to an infinite regress of times. His theory, which with modifications suggested by some of his critics, among the ablest of whom is Professor Broad, must be admitted to be a plausible one. But it should be remarked here that in our present imperfect state of knowledge no single one of these theories holds the field to the exclusion of the others. Yet, though in regard to the implications of precognition much is still conjectural, the conjectures, being logically based, as they are, on factual premises, are not of the sort to be dismissed as belonging to the world of fantasy.

The central difficulty in any study of the nature of precognition is in regard to the status of the future. Considerations already touched on above, compel us logically to the view that what appears to be future is not really future in the sense of being non-existent, and we cannot but hold that there is something delusive in ordinary perception with its successive phases of past, present and future. This leads us to another implication of precognition namely, that whatever its uses may be as a mathematical conception, time is not in reality a unilinear, irreversible series of events flowing in one direction only from the past to the future, but must be regarded rather as a *totum simul* in which past, present and future co-exist, though they appear to normal consciousness to be successive phases in a temporal flux. In the psychological phenomenon of "the specious present"

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we have actual experiential evidence to rebut any charge of nonsense that may be brought against the notion.

In the specious present or the time-span of ordinary consciousness we have, as it were, a duration-block in which indubitably successive events with distinctions of before-and-after are also manifestly contemporary in time. Its reality cannot be questioned as it is not a matter of inference but of direct experience open to introspection. Its temporal extensity is estimated to range from about half a second to as much as four seconds. It varies with different individuals and in different psycho-physiological and other conditions such, for instance, as those induced by certain drugs. This variability of the time-span of consciousness together with its unique feature of being an enduring present in which past, present and future co-exist, albeit only momentarily, carries with it an implication of profound significance to the whole question of precognition, for it means that A may now be perceiving an event which for B is already only a memory, and similarly an event still in the future for X may for Y be a present percept or a remembered event. Bertrand Russell in his *Human Knowledge: Its Scope and Limits*, speaks of "a complete complex of compresence" in reference to the past, present and future being compresent together in the one unitary moment of experience. Precognitive phenomena certainly suggest an extension of compresence beyond normal limits.

Admitting a specious present in which the elements of pastness and futurity are not delusive, though some philosophers, S. Alexander, for one, in his *Space, Time and Deity*, have argued to the contrary, the possibility of prehending future events may be plausibly accounted for by the assumption of an abnormal time-span of consciousness extending to wider fields of compresence, and embracing in the immediacy of its prehension events which are past and future for the normal specious present. Such an explanation of the precognition of distant future events by supposing an extension of the specious present beyond its normal limits is not novel. F. W. Myers, that pioneer psychical researcher, or parapsychologist as he would now be called, suggested it more than sixty years ago. Knowing what we now do about the subconscious, which seems to be the source to which most precognitive phenomena may be traced, it seems reasonable to assume that the specious present of the subconscious or "subliminal" self, or the parapersonality, or of what William James terms the "B" region of consciousness of any individual, is co-terminous with the whole of his life. This provides an explanation of the precognition by any individual of the future events of his own life. Going a step farther, it would not be far-fetched, illogical, or unscientific to invoke the explanatory aid of telepathy between individuals to account for paranormal precognition by a percipient of past or future events in the lives of others.

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DOROTHEA KROOK'S
THREE TRADITIONS OF MORAL THOUGHT

KARL BRITTON

THIS book[1] was the subject of a number of controversial reviews and of letters for and against. The author herself replied at some length to the comments of *The Times Literary Supplement* and in terms which the present reviewer has not forgotten. The chief complaints made against the book were (1) That it presents eccentric views on history and interpretation without notice and without proper support. (2) That it is a preaching book which generates more heat than light. To this were added objections to Mrs. Krook as a teacher for Part II of the English Tripos: it was thought scandalous that she should try to implant her own moral convictions (e.g. that what really matters is love and that most moral philosophers have tried to fob us off with a substitute for it) in the fresh and innocent hearts of Cambridge men and women in their final year. It was perhaps also suggested that Mrs. Krook, not being a philosopher or a classical scholar, or not being a Catholic, or not being at Oxford, or not being a man, was naturally disqualified from writing or lecturing on such serious topics.

Certainly if Mrs. Krook had been all of these things she would not have put forward this particular view of ethics and this extreme view about love between the opposite sexes. These views are worth considering and will introduce into ethical discussions (certainly amongst students) a life and interest they badly need.

With regard to (2), it is true that the book sometimes preaches and becomes excessively high-toned, long-winded and assertive. But one can skip one's way through the book and the preaching is not without punch and wit: in short one definitely decides to stay awake. Whether Mrs. Krook's lectures on the English Moralists ("from Plato to Sartre") are suitable for the Tripos seems to be a subject on which a reviewer of the book need not comment.

With regard to (1), a case seems to have been made out and Mrs. Krook's answer (*T. L. S.*, January 8, 1960) was not sufficient. The book fails to refer to theories and even generally accepted views which would weigh against her interpretations: and she was quite mistaken in thinking that these matters had no logical place in the argument she has presented. Perhaps Mrs. Krook would have done better to have written a book about the place of love in the moral life (or rather about the place she thinks that love ought to have in the moral life) and to have referred to the different traditions of moral thought in order to illustrate her view. This is in effect what Mrs. Krook does in Chapter X, where Augustine's views on lust are introduced and discussed in order to make

[1] *Three Traditions of Moral Thought.* By Dorothea Krook (Cambridge University Press. 1959). Pp. 347. Price 30s.

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clear (by contrast) the author's own views on physical love. The method she has generally adopted throughout the book is different: a chapter is devoted to each of nine authors. This seems to give us a book about the history of ethical thought: and we wonder why the Stoics are not included, or Spinoza, Butler, Kant or Sartre: why Bradley is in but Moore out. And as we read a chapter—for example the short chapter on Hume—we ask how can anyone leave so much out? How can anyone discuss the *Enquiry* rather than the *Treatise?* In the case of Plato, the difficulties are much greater. Only the *Gorgias* and some passages of the *Republic* are discussed: and Mrs. Krook so far identifies Plato with the Socrates of her chosen dialogues that she actually writes of Plato being pressed by Glaucon not to give up the argument about the Good (p. 133).

What is Mrs. Krook really doing if she is not simply writing a history? She is considering certain philosophical works as having a place in an argument about what is the greatest good and what goods are attainable by man: in particular an argument about whether love is the greatest good and whether and in what sense it is attainable by man. This leads her to divide the authors into those who take a high view of human life and those who take a low view. Finally, Mrs. Krook distinguishes three great movements: Religious, Secular and Humanist and sorts her philosophers accordingly. Mrs. Krook acknowledges often enough that her task is itself a limited one: but no amount of acknowledgment gets over the disadvantages of the method. Great men are labelled and such labels are very sticky. It is, I think, significant that those philosophers who maintain that self-sufficiency, or utility, or sympathy, is the true basis of the moral life, are described as offering us a *substitute for love.*

Plato (in the *Gorgias*) and St. Paul (in I Corinthians) had a high view of human nature. This means that they did not expect to see men made perfect by education or reform or restraint: but believed in "the transforming power of love"—whether love of the Good or love of the Redeemer. They were also willing and able to see the baseness human nature is capable of. The *Gorgias* is the perfection of the Greek view, or perhaps transcends it, pointing towards a notion of the Good incarnate —an anticipation of Christianity. The *Gorgias* logically requires a revealed God and a revealed Gospel to complete it (58). In St. Paul's epistle, the Platonic discipline of the mind is transformed into a discipleship of love. In offering Christ for love, Christianity is offering love (even if incomplete) and not a substitute.

Aristotle, Hobbes and Hume have a low view of human life. All deny the possibility of transformation by love: only Hobbes is prepared to admit the full depths of man's evil nature. Aristotle repudiates the Socratic doctrine and takes his stand with Polus and Callicles. He offers us Friendship and Magnanimity, but these really mean the unsplendid isolation of self-sufficiency. Hume offers us selfish sociability: Hobbes, more realistically, bases all on fear.

These—the Platonic-Christian, and the Secular-Utilitarian—are the two great classical traditions of morality. The third tradition is Humanism. Mrs. Krook remarks (with justice) that Humanism (in her sense) can only be understood as a derivative of the two classical traditions, but is

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nevertheless to be taken as being "as total an interpretation of moral experience as the other two"(1). It rejects revelation: it accepts an order of values as "transcendent within the human order alone"(6): and perhaps this means that it rejects transcendental metaphysics as well as revelation. Its various forms owe more or less to the preceding schools: in Bradley, Humanism is "philosophical"; in J. S. Mill, it is rationalistic: Arnold's *Literature and Dogma* is frankly Biblical—a kind of uncanonical Christianity. Humanism in all its forms accepts the redemptive and transforming power of love as shown chiefly in Christianity: but all those forms so far mentioned lack something which Mrs. Krook regards as of very great importance—and it is something which Christianity and Platonism also lack. Here we come to the author's most distinctive view: that love is incomplete and (in effect) distorted, if it denies the paramount value of physical love between the sexes. In D. H. Lawrence (*The Man Who Died*), she sees the missing truth although imperfectly understood and disastrously mis-presented.

Lawrence made the grave mistake of presenting his case for sexual love as an Either-Or. The man who died saw that something had been omitted from his gospel and from his past life: and he totally rejected his gospel and his past life in favour of the redemptive power of sexual love. Mrs. Krook believes that this repudiation rests on a mistake. There is a perverse and possessive will to serve, a greed in giving, which easily passes itself off as love: and Lawrence mistakenly identifies it with the love of the Gospels. Mrs. Krook holds that the love of Christ in the Gospels has to be reaffirmed—"without this, nothing". What the new Humanism does is to incorporate in it (or draw out of it) a doctrine of the value of physical love between the sexes. With this in mind, she offers a sketch of a revised version of Lawrence's fable: and if this seems presumptuous, Lawrence would hardly be in a position to complain. But this sketch is treated by Mrs. Krook as if it were perhaps *premature*. She writes of the Humanist as

"still in the grave awaiting the true Annunciation [*sic*]. But this is the most obscure and mysterious part of the religious Humanism · · ·

and it is impossible to say more about it here (28).

It seems that Mrs. Krook rejects the doctrine of the existence of God and the divinity of Christ as these are taught by the Church. What her Messianic hope can mean, it is hard to say.

Some of the moral (as opposed to the religious) consequences of this view are worked out in an appendix. She takes as her text the theology of sexuality as expounded in the Report of the Lambeth Conference of 1958. The report, in her view, shows great understanding, humanity and imagination: but there are inconsistencies in it. While it proclaims that sexual intercourse in marriage is a good in itself, it also shows hints of the older view that sexual intercourse is always carnal, concupiscent. Mrs. Krook has a very high view of the part played by intercourse between the sexes as an expression and consummation of love. She resists any attempt (for example) to abstract from it an element of *pleasure*, because that would lower it to the level of desires and appetites. In fact Mrs. Krook insists very strongly on one particular way of regarding

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sexual intercourse: and on assigning to it a very important moral role. Much of what she says is cogent and shows imagination, humanity and understanding: in fact much of it is really sober good sense expressed in rather overwhelming language. And no doubt she is absolutely right in thinking that we need to put physical love back into the centre of life, not trying to cut it out and not making it into a life by itself. However, one would like to know in more detail what Mrs. Krook's view of love (in the wider sense) is: how it works itself out in marriage and in family life: how it shows its transforming power outside marriage and family life. Love is not a simple subject.

PROFESSOR CAMPBELL'S GIFFORD LECTURES

BASIL MITCHELL

IT is impossible to read Professor Campbell's book[1] without being impressed by its scale and by its author's candour and intellectual vigour. He has, in these Gifford Lectures, a dominant concern which is the vindication of philosophical idealism against empiricism and the philosophy of analysis. This imposes a complex task upon the reviewer who ought ideally not only to comment upon his treatment of his chosen themes of selfhood and Godhood, but to adjudicate between him and the philosophers he criticizes. To attempt this task would be presumptuous for anyone but the ideal reviewer; nevertheless, some conclusions may emerge from a discussion of Professor Campbell's argument.

Professor Campbell examines the concept of the Self as a prolegomenon to the Gifford Lecturer's proper concern with Natural Theology. Theology cannot do without the soul; and, later on, Campbell is going to stress the importance of "mind" as a natural symbol of the divine. Throughout his discussions the opponents he has in mind seem to be phenomenalists or behaviourists in the tradition of Hume. Against them he argues (1) that the notion of a serial self is unintelligible; (2) that empiricists have habitually underrated the *activity* of the cognizing mind, and (3) that introspection reveals an active subject. In driving home his attack under (2) he draws upon the judgment theory of cognition which, he believes, by stressing the activity of the mind even in perception freed the idealists from the errors of Hume. It is interesting to remark that Professor Hampshire and Mr. Strawson have recently arrived at similar conclusions by a different route.

Professor Campbell proceeds to an examination of "activity and its modes". He draws a distinction, in the first place, between activity *in* the self and activity *of* the self, and, within the latter, between activity that is merely the expression of character and creative activity, such as

[1] *On Selfhood and Godhood.* By C. A. CAMPBELL (Allen and Unwin. 1957). Pp. xxxvi + 433. Price 35s.

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occurs pre-eminently in moral decision. A still further distinction is then made between moral-decision activity and moral-effort activity. From this point he proceeds naturally to a discussion of the freedom of the will on lines already made familiar by his previous writings.

Campbell's thesis here is one which may well puzzle many who have always felt that he was fundamentally right in his vindication of free will against sophisticated determinists. Campbell seems to hold that a man is sole author only of his "creative" actions and that these alone possess the sort of freedom which is a precondition of moral responsibility. He seems also to hold that such actions form a very small proportion of a man's total activity; indeed he goes so far as to say (p. 151) that ninety-nine per cent of the choices in most men's lives are "determined by character as so far formed". In these cases a man acts from strongest desire (there being no motive for him to do otherwise) and "a man's strongest desire at any moment may in fact be regarded as a function of his character in relation to the given situation".

Professor Campbell admits that the result is paradoxical, but appears not to appreciate the full extent of the paradox. What are we to say, for example, of Aristotle's σώφρων and ἐγκρατής? The former chooses the mean and enjoys it; he acts from his character as so far formed. The latter chooses the mean indeed but only after a struggle; he "rises to duty". The ἐγκρατής acts against strongest desire and is allowed on Campbell's criterion to be morally responsible. The σώφρων acts from strongest desire and is, presumably, too good to be free.

The fact is that the concept of character is extremely slippery. We want to know how to *identify* qualities of character before we can tell whether it makes sense, with Professor Campbell, to talk of them as determining actions or of their being transcended. He defines character as "a developing, but relatively stable and relatively systematic complex of conative dispositions" but fails adequately to cash this abstract definition, except in terms of the equally obscure notion of "strongest desire". He invites us to discover this by asking ourselves what we should do "if we allowed our desiring nature and nothing else to dictate our choice". There are two difficulties here. One is that, in so far as this question can be answered, it throws light on only part of my character (e.g. on whether I am lazy, but not on whether I am conscientious). The other is that it is doubtful whether the question *can* be answered except in the most elementary cases. I can ask myself "What would I decide to do if certain considerations did not apply?" thus calling upon myself for a hypothetical decision, but except in extreme cases, as when desperately hungry or in the final stages of a seduction, I do not see how I can usefully ask myself "What would I do, if I did not take any active decision at all?"

The truth is, surely, that the greater part of human activity is creative, in Campbell's sense, and that Campbell is prevented from recognizing the fact by a too mechanistic interpretation of the role of character and motive.

A similar tendency to go too far with the mechanistic assumptions of some of his opponents can be discerned in his treatment of mind-body

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interaction. He rightly insists that the notion of activity, as Berkeley saw, is one that can only be understood in terms of the agent's own experience and, in order to substantiate this, as against Hume, he has to show that, when we seem to experience or "enjoy" activity, we really are active. He believes that introspection shows that we are *spiritually* active in the sense that we really are *trying*, e.g., to move our leg; but the problem, as he sees it, is to show that such spiritual activity is physically efficacious, i.e. that we really do move the leg. His reply to Hume is to charge him (and with him most of his critics) with assuming a false premiss, viz. that "when, as we say, we *will* to move our leg, the immediate object of our will is the moving of our leg". The truth is rather that the immediate object of our willing is not the movement of our leg, but "certain kinaesthetic and other sensations upon which we have found from experience the movement of our leg normally supervenes".

Here "willing to move our leg" is identified with "trying to move our leg". If my leg is paralyzed, I try to move it and fail; normally I try to move it and succeed. There are, then, two events, my willing and the movement of my leg. Hume asks how I *know* that the one event will be followed by the other. Campbell says I can't know it and that the object of my willing is only kinaesthetic sensations. But Hume's question can be repeated at this stage: how do I know that my willing to produce these sensations will be followed by their occurrence? This Campbell with typical candour recognizes, and replies, "We are deceived in our expectation that certain kinaesthetic sensations will ensue. But the fact that these sensations do not ensue does not imply that we are deceived in our belief that we are exerting an active power in relation to their production". The co-operation of other factors is required for success.

If this is (as I think) the right answer, Campbell could have advanced it at the earlier stage.

Both these discussions, one feels, would have been helped by the "linguistic philosopher's" attention to the ordinary use of words which makes him wary of using philosophical terms like "will" and "determined" as if they could be trusted to maintain a single meaning unchanged through a variety of contexts. *His* temptation, which Professor Campbell escapes, has been to suppose that when ordinary language has been mapped, there is no further philosophical work to be done.

Professor Campbell claims at the end of Part I to have shown that "a view of the self can be rationally defended which makes intelligible the sort of language theology is concerned to use in talking about the human soul", i.e. as a relatively abiding entity which is spiritual and active. There remains the larger question whether there is anything in theological talk about God. Professor Campbell poses this question, with refreshing simplicity, in the form, "Is religion true?" Religion involves belief in and worship of supernatural beings, so that the question might be put, "Is there at least one supernatural being?" But the civilized man wants to know more than this; he wants to know whether there are or are not good reasons for believing in the reality of "a single, infinite and eternal spirit, perfect in power, wisdom and goodness, who is the source of all that is, who is the moral governor of the world and who is yet a

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living presence in the hearts of men". That is, he wants to know, "Is *theism* true?"

Theism can be understood, says Campbell, in a literal or a non-literal manner, according as God's perfect power, wisdom, and goodness are or are not identified in principle with those qualities as we know them in human experience. He calls the former view "rational theism", the latter "supra-rational theism". Rational theism has been, he maintains some-what surprisingly, the belief of most theologians. It must be rejected on the ground that it is hard (though just possible) to reconcile with experience, in particular the experience of evil; and that it is logically impossible that God should exercise thought or will in any straight-forward meaning of those terms. Either symbolic theology or no theology at all. The rest of the book constitutes Professor Campbell's attempt to construct a symbolic theology.

The nature of the problem is clearly identified; how can one establish the validity of symbols, when the symbolizandum is, *ex hypothesi*, not open to inspection? The answer is developed in two stages. In the first stage Campbell argues, illuminatingly, that concepts like power, love, justice are authentic natural symbols of the religious consciousness, in that religious experience characteristically calls forth the same responses, in a higher degree, as do these qualities encountered in human life. In the second stage, he seeks to demonstrate metaphysically the objective validity of the religious consciousness. And it is at this second stage that his procedure will raise doubts in the minds both of empiricist philosophers who cannot countenance any *a priori* metaphysical demonstrations, and of theologians who do not believe that they are any adequate substitute for divine revelation.

I hope it is not unfair to say that at this stage Campbell introduces a *deus ex machina* in the shape of Bradley who is invoked to show that Reality must be supra-rational, because in any form in which we can conceive it Reality is involved in contradictions. Campbell, however, goes beyond Bradley in maintaining that we know enough of what intellectual demands the supra-rational reality would have to meet to be able to indicate the features of our present experience which can best be taken as symbols of it. Thus we know that it must possess a wholly comprehensive unity-in-difference of a kind which, in our present experience, we find most fully exemplified in minds. Hence mind may be taken as an objectively valid symbol of Reality.

Professor Campbell claims to have constructed a symbolic theology which is valid as the theoretical expression of religion and to have demon-strated its truth. The claim to proof will be accepted by the reader only to the extent that he accepts Bradley. The account of supra-rational theism, stimulating though it is, seemed to one reader to fail in the end precisely because, in making God wholly inscrutable, it precluded state-ments about Him from the logical possibility of any empirical confirma-tion or disproof. Professor Campbell says that for him the problem of evil is no problem. But (the complaint is an old one), if what men believe about God is compatible with anything, what meaning can then be attached to those beliefs?

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NEW BOOKS

Thought and Action. By STUART HAMPSHIRE. (Chatto and Windus. 1959. Pp. 276. Price 25s.)

This book will be enjoyed and appreciated by those who believe that philosophy is an art like literature (or perhaps like literary criticism) and that its problems are incurable intellectual itches to be temporarily soothed by the latest philosophical anodyne. It will be found baffling and infuriating by those who think that the problems of philosophy are genuine problems and capable in principle of solution once they have been posed in the right way. The present reviewer belongs to the second party. This review may therefore be unfair.

Thought and Action is hard to describe, impossible to summarize and very difficult to read. It can be roughly characterized as a discursive essay on a group of connected concepts; knowledge, self-consciousness, identity, intention, action and free will are some of the most important. But these topics are not treated in any conventionally analytic and rational way. The style and treatment is determinedly literary and at the same time deliberately abstract. It lacks any clear thread of argument or any ordered conclusions from evidence and lacks at the same time the concrete examples that might have helped the reader to hold on to the subtle connections that Professor Hampshire traces between the concepts that he deals with. The book is so unlike contemporary or indeed traditional English philosophical writing that it is extraordinarily difficult to judge it fairly. To the present reviewer it seems to combine the disadvantages of the extreme abstractness of, say, Carnap or Spinoza (but lacking their standards of rigour) and the elegant literary façade of Plato or Santayana (but without their concreteness of illustrative example and metaphor). But in spite of thus combining the failings of two very different philosophical traditions, it is certainly not an unrewarding book to anyone who will read determinedly through its marathon chapters and paragraphs. Within the limits imposed by these daunting disadvantages, the book is extremely well written. Every sentence is as carefully and smoothly phrased as Hampshire's philosophical writing always is.

The first chapter might be described as an epistemological essay on the place of the individual in his environment. A main theme is the unsatisfactory character of empiricist theories of perception. This is attributed to the empiricist tendency to regard ourselves as detached observers of the world and not as active participants in its processes. To this Hampshire attributes the empiricist failure to provide any framework or viewpoint for the perceiver. But an empiricist might well reply to this neo-Kantian charge that recent experimental psychology has shown just how we come by such a framework and shown it by empirical methods. (Here, as elsewhere in the book, relevant empirical evidence is resolutely ignored.) The Locke–Hume passive view of perceiving has indeed been superseded, but by laboratory findings and not by Wittgensteinian armchair insights. Perceiving is a learned activity. Chapter II on *Intention and Action* is a more difficult section in which these ideas and their mutual involvements are explored with the help of allied concepts like decision, personal identity and the notion of a common language. Chapter III on *Action and Self-Consciousness* is a lively and provocative account of the contrast between decisions and predictable events, between reasons and causes with some consequences for the problem of free-

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will. Chapter IV employs some previous argument about criteria of sameness and identity to show that ideals for human action and for human nature are essentially changeable. In consequence, moral codes, like philosophy itself, are essentially provisional and open to improvement. Hampshire seems to avoid the important question whether this process is just a series of changes or an asymptotic progress towards an unattainable ideal. He appears to be arguing for some kind of dialectic whose exact nature never becomes clear.

Each of these topics is developed not by an orderly argument, marshalling evidence and drawing conclusions from it but by a series of *aperçus*, often platitudinous, sometimes enlightening, sometimes challenging, often factually untrue. The reader tends to be lulled into unwariness by a series of well phrased truisms only to find that he has swallowed some empirical falsehoods along with the rest. The reason for this is, I think, that many of Hampshire's statements have the curious double-faced character typical of metaphysics. Read at one level they seem harmless tautologies; read at a different level, they seem empirically false or at least quite ungrounded. (E.g. "We divide and re-divide reality into its segments and sub-segments along the lines of our practical interests". "The mistake is to assume that my only contact with objects and with the world of physical things is through perception, in which objects are presented to my passive mind.") We accept these statements and many other like them as harmless platitudes and then find to our dismay that unexpected consequences are drawn from them read in another and less acceptable sense.

Thought and Action seems to me to have two main faults of a general character. It is worth while to comment on these as they are both characteristic of British philosophy since it fell under the evil influence of the late Wittgenstein: (1) a contempt for rigorous argument; (2) a contempt for empirical fact. The second of these is amply illustrated by Hampshire's generalizations on matters of psychology, a field where there is abundant factual evidence, continually relevant and continually ignored. (It is significant to note that the only psychological citations are to Freud (four times) and to psycho-analysis (four times). It is time that philosophers realized that psycho-analysis is not the whole of psychology or even a reputable part of it.) It is really not good enough to make glib generalizations about animal psychology, for instance, without familiarizing oneself with something of the vast corpus of experimental and observational findings. What is the evidence, for example, that animals cannot observe conventions, cannot entertain thoughts about their own future, or that it is impossible to ascribe intentions to them? These may conceivably be true statements, but we would like to be shown the evidence for them. For Hampshire, they seem to follow from the simple fact that animals have no language. But if *this* is the evidence for these remarkable generalizations, they become trivial and uninteresting at once. They are no longer empirical. Once again one hesitates between "important, empirical but unfounded" and "linguistic and trivial". Other examples of Hampshire's tendency to deal with complicated empirical questions by *a priori* methods can be found in his remarks on the nature and functions of language.

His attitude to argument is exemplified by his whole treatment of his problems. But he does explicitly (p. 92) affirm the pathetic contemporary belief, that induction and deduction are not the only reputable kinds of argument. If this is indeed true it should be possible to cite instances of the other types of argument and to state unequivocally the criteria for their validity. This has never been done and, I should imagine, is never likely to be. If such arguments existed, they would have been anatomized before now.

If this review seems over-critical of what everyone must recognize as a

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subtle, skilful and perceptive piece of philosophical writing, it is because it is dismaying to see one of the leading British philosophers abandoning the rationalism that he once valued. A French poet of the nineteenth century recommended as the first item in a recipe for good writing: "Take literature and wring its neck." It is certainly good advice for a philosopher.

D. J. O'CONNOR.

The Self as Agent. By JOHN MACMURRAY. (Faber and Faber, London. 1957. Pp. 230. Price 25s.)

The post-war years have made philosophers familiar with the concept of revolution within their own subject. The thesis developed by Professor Macmurray in his Gifford Lectures, *The Self as Agent*, is considerably more revolutionary (and, let it be said at once, philosophically very much more interesting) than anything which has come from either the existential or linguistic philosophers. Briefly, Macmurray wishes to establish the general thesis that traditional philosophy has approached its problems in terms of a self conceived as subject for whom the world is an object; the primary activity of the self is then theoretical, the search for knowledge, and the result is an inevitable egocentricity. The cogito of Descartes, the "I think" of Kant, are its watchwords. Against this, Macmurray wishes to suggest that the way to philosophical progress demands a complete break with this tradition and an acceptance of the view that the self is primarily an agent who *intends* change and who has his being in community with other selves. For the "I think" we must substitute the "I do" of the agent.

Taking Kant as the representative modern philosopher, Macmurray in his first three chapters develops an illuminating criticism of Kant and of contemporary philosophers which leads him to a fundamental rejection of the Cartesian dualism which has dominated and disturbed so much philosophizing. Not the least interesting part of this introductory material is the manner in which Macmurray, with great sympathetic insight, describes the nature and faults of both existentialism and logical analysis. In the fourth chapter, perhaps the most difficult in the book, he launches his counter-Cartesian thesis that the self must be primarily understood as an agent for whom the reflective activity of cognition is secondary and negative. This leads in the succeeding three chapters to a discussion of perception, freedom, and causality, which, though open to criticism in its details, is original. and enlightening. The next two chapters, on reflective activity in general, are particularly noteworthy for their discussion of the distinction between motive and intention and the activity of valuation. The concluding chapter contains an outline of a philosophy of history, and faces the problem of how the unity of experience may be thought.

It is not possible in a short review to do justice to a work of this type. Macmurray's conception of philosophy is very different from that which prevails among those who devote themselves exclusively to analysis; he does not write in the accepted linguistic idiom, but in the clear forceful prose of a craftsman who is thoroughly familiar with the main trends in the history of western philosophy. In so far as philosophy is considered to involve radical criticism of the presuppositions of accepted ways of thinking, this book merits the attention of any philosopher who claims to be sensitive to the predicament of modern thought, and who is not content with the reduction of philosophy to a mere academic exercise. Readers who are familiar with Macmurray's work over the past twenty-five years will recognize echoes from

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Reason and Emotion (1932), *Interpreting the Universe* (1935), *The Clue to History* (1938), *The Boundaries of Science* (1939), and other works. Although Macmurray disowns any intention of developing a systematic philosophy there is a completeness of conception about *The Self as Agent* which fills many gaps in his early works and gives impressive weight to the argument. Macmurray argues convincingly that we are on the verge of a philosophical revolution comparable in scope to that which came about after the breakdown of the medieval world. In making the "I do" of the agent the starting point of a philosophical interpretation of human experience (for in Macmurray's work criticism is the preliminary to construction), Macmurray is suggesting a reassessment of philosophical categories which, if carried through in detail, will enable the modern world once again to grasp the essential unity of human experience. Macmurray claims to do no more than to break new ground. When philosophy re-awakens from its present undogmatic slumbers, Macmurray's work will be recognized to have been pioneer work of the first importance. It is to be hoped that publication of the second volume of lectures will not be long delayed, when it will be possible to undertake a full assessment of his philosophical position.

A. R. C. DUNCAN.

Second Thoughts in Moral Philosophy. By A. C. EWING. (Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd. 1959. Pp. vii + 190. Price 21s.)

Dr. Ewing has taken his place well in the past in the line of distinguished advocates of the belief in ethical objectivity, Moore, Prichard, Carritt, Ross, Broad, and so on. In this role he has also been an adherent of the view that there are non-natural ethical properties. But, in this second regard, he was already breaking away from his own tradition in *The Definition of Good*, published in 1947; and one of the main ways in which he now has second thoughts about ethics is in the firm rejection of the idea of non-natural ethical qualities. He is impressed by the "oddness and elusiveness" of these alleged properties and notes the difficulty which philosophers have had "to find on inspection the simple non-natural quality of good". In the case of obligation, "the property of being obliged to do something" is a strange one; and one also thinks of properties as having a part to play in causing things. Ewing does not, therefore, "hold that the best way of regarding ethical thought is to think of it as the detection of special qualities and relations existing in experiences, mental states and actions". This view "assimilates ethical too much to factual judgments". A further change tends towards closer rapprochement with rival schools. Ewing will still have no truck with outright subjectivism and naturalism, and he reinforces his earlier attacks on these views by additional arguments in the present book. But he has a much greater respect for the course more recently taken by non-naturalist ethics in finding the main clue to the nature of ethical principles in the ideas of command, choice, decision or activity. Here again the concessions are only partial. To think of worth or obligation solely in terms of commands or decisions, even when these involve the adoption of a total policy, errs, among other things, by committing us to an ethics, like the Socratic one, which makes deliberate wrongdoing or sin impossible. The objectivity of ethical judgments must not be jeopardized, and to this end some non-natural element must be retained at some point. The task is to do justice to the place of conation of some kind in ethical judgments and to hold on very firmly to the objectivity of such judgments and their nature as assertions which must be true or false.

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This is accomplished, in the first place, by making the concept of "ought" ultimate, unique and non-natural. But it is a non-natural concept, not a quality; and its essence is to assert that a *tendency* to action, or a conative attitude, is "justified and indeed imperatively required by the facts". The notion of reasons and justification in ethics is thus prominent, but, in the last resort, the justification is "directly cognized" in heeding the relevant facts—the term "intuition" is also used but allowed to be misleading in some respects. "Good" is then defined in terms of the obligation to take a "pro" or favourable attitude to something as being inherently fitting or reasonable or as being morally obligatory, the latter being the important factor normally. A subsidiary second thought is still to recognize these two meanings of "ought" but to lay more stress on the moral "ought" and reduce the "ought" of fittingness to reasonableness, in the sense of a course one "intellectually ought to adopt".

This is a very bare outline of a view that is developed with great ingenuity, insight and moral sensitiveness. There is no desire to come to terms with prevailing fashion as such, but only the utmost determination to seek out the truth. Some current views, like those of Professor Ryle, are very severely censured. In presenting his main theme Ewing also examines most helpfully a number of subsidiary topics—*prima facie* duties, the various senses of "doing one's duty", the relation of moral philosophy to practice. Some extremely wise observations are made on the last topic; and a final chapter, dealing with freedom and responsibility, offers, not so much second thoughts, as a careful re-statement of the view the author has always held but with more willingness, it seems to me, to recognize the strength of the indeterminist case.

The assessment of Ewing's main theme is not easy. For how much difference is there, in the last resort, between a non-natural concept and a non-natural property? May not the "alleged oddity and elusiveness" of the latter be, moreover, due to the prevailing empiricism which tempts us to view all which claims to be non-empiricist in quasi-empiricist terms—a situation well displayed in discussions of the self, as Ewing himself has helped us to see. Comparisons with colour and seeing may also have been overworked by Moore and his followers. One should remember also the stress on the "consequential" and "toti-resultant" character of alleged non-natural properties. Did the sponsors of these have something very different in mind from Ewing's justification of a favourable attitude directly cognized by the facts?

At times I also suspect Ewing of assimilating goodness too completely to duty—sometimes in view of the pre-eminence given to the moral ought, the two seem to be almost conflated. No doubt we feel we ought to do something, if possible, about things we deem good, to provide facilities for them and to encourage others to seek them and so on. But how much has this to do with finding them good? Does not the worth of things strike us more directly when we know what they are like? I wonder too whether we must always have *some* tendency, not of course the strongest, towards an end deemed obligatory. Could I not have a duty, and recognize that, to do something to which I am not inclined at all? If not, may not this be a psychological rather than an ethical matter? Ewing seems also to take a rather short way with a very special experience when, in discussing freedom, he decries the "alleged immediate awareness of freedom" on the ground that "we could not discover by introspection that we were not determined by the past". There is too some disposition to think that an act may be distinct from some volition that causes it—or the ascription of that view to libertarians. Difficulties are raised about a "causality (of the self) which is not dependent on the characteristics of the self" and to this there seems to be an answer in that

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uniqueness of the self which Ewing's own insistence on the non-material and distinctive nature of mind helps us to appreciate.

These are, however, difficulties which it is hard to press without coming to terms with the close and painstaking character of the author's own arguments. They must be taken up on some occasion where ampler concession may be made to Ewing's positive achievement in this book. It will certainly be surprising if Ewing's second thoughts in ethics do not elicit considerable comment for some time to come. On account of the originality of his main theme and the thoroughness of its development, the criticism of much contemporary thought and the indication of where its main positive import may lie, Ewing's present work seems to me to be one of the most outstanding contributions to ethics in recent times. That the book shows also the pull of the author's general sympathy with idealism may add to its interest at a time when idealism is a little in the air again.

H. D. LEWIS.

Ethics since 1900. By MARY WARNOCK. (Oxford University Press. 1960. Pp. 212. Home University Library. Price in U.K. 8s. 6d.)

The number of books giving a summary account of the philosophical revolution since 1900 continues to increase and they certainly serve a useful purpose. The present one is up to the best standards of the series, though it might like all of them be criticized as being too partial in its selection of authors for discussion, to which I suppose the reply would be made that it is better in a small book to deal with some authors comparatively adequately than to deal with more altogether inadequately. Perhaps it would have been wiser in view of the limitations of space to keep to the characteristic line of thought with which Mrs. Warnock is associated and omit the chapters on Bradley and Sartre, but the latter at least is extremely interesting, though neither contributes appreciably to illuminating the development with which the book is primarily concerned, and I must confess that the chapter on Sartre itself does not leave me any less puzzled as to how anybody can be attracted by his philosophy and its mode of exposition.

The criticisms of Moore are acute, if sometimes too severe. Of other non-naturalist, intuitionist philosophers Prichard and Ross are dealt with, not very sympathetically. While Moore is at least allowed the merit of having expressed impressive views which could make a considerable difference in practice, the now common charge of trivializing the subject and of refusing to discuss anything which might be of practical value is hurled at other recent writers in moral philosophy in general and in particular at Ross. Since this charge is very common nowadays, I would like to sketch the kind of defence which may be made. (1) The examples of, e.g., Ross may be trivial, but for an example to do what is wanted in elucidating and confirming ethical theories it must usually be simple and agreed, and if it is simple and agreed it can hardly fail to be "trivial". (2) It is of real *practical* importance of itself to give a coherent account of ethics that will not obviously be open to the attack of the sceptic nor imply that ethics is a merely subjective matter incapable of real justification, for whether one takes such a view or not may easily be decisive in a conflict between desire and obligation. (3) The controversial questions of practical ethics cannot be discussed without much reference to an empirical knowledge of a more or less specialized kind. The conclusion I draw from this is not that a moral philosopher should abstain from such discussions, but that the place for them is not in a general treatise on moral philosophy but in books or articles on more specific problems.

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Ayer and Stevenson are treated much more sympathetically. Mrs. Warnock however holds it "exceedingly unplausible" to say that with ultimate ethical disputes neither contending view can be said to be better than the other. She makes the interesting suggestion that the belief she thus stigmatizes depends on assuming that there is a complete finite set of criteria which make up our moral code (pp. 124–5), but unfortunately does not develop this point. But it is a serious deficiency in the book that she omitted to consider the already widespread and apparently growing movement of thought in favour of the recognition that ethical and evaluative judgments, while not descriptive, are still objective in the sense that they claim and admit of justification. Of British works subsequent to 1947, she discusses only Urmson's article on *Grading*, Hare's *Language of Morals* and Nowell-Smith's *Ethics*. Interesting references are made to the influence of Wittgenstein and Dewey on ethics. The chapter on *Moral Psychology* is concerned almost entirely with free will: the view that determinism can be reconciled with ethics by interpreting "could" as "would have done under certain conditions", is rejected on, I think, very superficial linguistic grounds, and not, as would be more plausible, on the basis of a careful interpretation of the moral attitude.

Mrs. Warnock would like to see greater subtlety and more elaborate psychological descriptions and linguistic distinctions in ethics. She has some inclination to return to naturalism as against both the "non-naturalists" and the "emotivists", but I am not at all clear that many philosophers would object to the amount of naturalism she wants. When she suggests that naturalism should not be altogether discarded, she seems to be objecting merely to those philosophers, if any, who hold that what people desire is quite irrelevant to deciding what moral principles one ought to adopt (pp. 204–5). The book is stimulating and clear, and gives a fair impression at least of the side of modern ethical thought in which she is interested.

<div align="right">A. C. EWING.</div>

Essays in Moral Philosophy. Edited by A. I. MELDEN. (University of Washington Press, Seattle. 1958. Pp. xii + 216. Price $4.50.)

The editor's purpose in this book was to "encourage philosophers to explore specific problems in moral philosophy rather than the usually tiresome and surely parasitic question of how moral philosophy should be done". It is a collection of essays which satisfy this purpose and almost all of which are of the highest competence. The problems with which they deal are specific, but at the same time they are key problems of fundamental importance. It is not surprising therefore that the topics of the various contributors are, as the editor observes, remarkably interconnected. Frankena discusses with scholarship and critical penetration an issue which is of central importance in current controversies: the question of the relation between seeing that one ought, morally, to do something, and having a motive for doing it. Ryle throws light on the very similar issue of the connection between knowing what is right and caring about it in his "On Forgetting the Difference between Right and Wrong". His explicit interest is in "the epistemological wheels on which ethical theories are made to run" and ends deliberately at a point where he might be "seduced into talking Ethics". So, in this sense of "Ethics", do all the other contributors. Such virtue is undoubtedly of utility in preventing a general exhortatory debauch; but in Ryle's case it is difficult not to feel that we are losing as much as we gain in the case of others. Hart complains that the concepts of duty and obligation have been given too important

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a place in moral philosophy. He examines the concepts of legal duty and obligation to show the restricted conditions under which it is proper to use related concepts in moral situations. Urmson similarly complains that in moral philosophy we have been too exclusively concerned with the obligatory, the permissible and the forbidden, at the expense of the supererogatory. He argues that the saintly and the heroic must be accounted for, and that utilitarianism is best able to do this. Brandt argues convincingly (though in an irritating style, a mixture of pedantry and colloquialisms which contrasts very much with the urbanity, vivacity and clarity of Urmson's writing) that moral blame implies an evaluation of character. Singer's essay is an attempt to set out a useful distinction between moral rules and principles. The value of what he says depends, of course, on the use he wishes to make of the distinction. He is mainly concerned to show how principles, which cannot conflict, are used in the justification of rules, which can conflict and are therefore *prima facie*. Unfortunately rigorous and convincing argument about how principles can justify rules is sacrificed to a concern with the principle—rule distinction. The two articles which seem not altogether at home in this collection are Prior's "Escapism: the Logical Basis of Ethics" and G. E. Hughes's "Moral Condemnation". Prior is concerned with the construction of systems of deontic logic which can be interpreted in ethical terms. He suggests that a system concerning the relations between statements about what is necessary for escaping something feared is formally identical with a system concerning what is necessary to being morally perfect. He is not of course suggesting anything more than a formal similarity. It is worth finding this out for "there is a beauty in such parallelisms which it is a pleasure to contemplate". Only the most narrowly puritan will be outraged by this. Hughes' article is not distinguished from the others by subject-matter; rather it seems to be addressed to a different kind of audience. He may have conceived his task as writing an elementary introduction to the topic in which difficulties must be ignored for the sake of simplicity. The editor says that Hughes "touches on" themes on which the other contributors focus their attention; and he does not, indeed, give them the detailed and careful attention that they receive elsewhere in this book.

A. Phillips Griffiths.

The Political Philosophy of Hobbes: His Theory of Obligation. By Howard Warrender. (O.U.P. Pp. ix + 346. Price 42s.)

This book, within the limits which Mr. Warrender has imposed on it, is outstandingly important. The limits, it must be said, are quite severe. He has hardly allowed himself a glance at Hobbes's predecessors, or at the genesis of his ideas, or at the intellectual or political situation within which he worked. The author holds us strictly to Hobbes's texts and never peers behind the scenes at any intentions Hobbes may have had for writing what he did. Most of Hobbes's own out-lying doctrines are ignored as irrelevant to the author's purpose, which is simply to establish, in all its comprehensiveness and complexity, Hobbes's answer to the question. Why ought the citizen obey the laws? I shall have to indicate two places where I feel that this exclusion of Hobbes's intentions and outlying doctrines has been unfortunate. But if Hobbes's theory of obligation is by no means the whole of his political philosophy, and if his philosophy is by no means the whole of his world-view, the fact remains that his theory of obligation is the central outcome of his world-view, and badly

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needed treatment on the scale it has at last received. As it is, Mr. Warrender's survey of this area of convergence in Hobbes's thought occupies over three hundred pages of orderly argument and contains no superfluities. His book— I give the information for what it is worth—has compelled me to revise many opinions about Hobbes. Each thesis is carefully explained and supported by just quotations. Passages which appear to run counter to it are scrupulously cited and judiciously handled.

The Hobbes who emerges from Mr. Warrender's book is considerably closer to Locke than the titanic architect of a doctrine of "Will and Artefact" who emerges from Professor Oakeshott's Introduction to *Leviathan*. The book is directed against the idea that Hobbes's state of nature was a moral vacuum and that all morality is created by the Sovereign's fiat. *Some* type of obligation must ante-date the institution of the Sovereign, since the Sovereign cannot authenticate himself, and Mr. Warrender argues that "there is in Hobbes's philosophy a theory of an obligation of the same type, that runs through the whole of his account of man, both apart from and within civil society". This type of obligation is engendered by the laws of nature. (Natural rights are to be regarded, according to Warrender, not as the complement of other people's duties under the laws of nature, but as what a person cannot be obliged by the laws of nature to renounce. "Ought" implies "Can", and no one can be obliged to do what he cannot do and everyone has a right to do what he cannot help doing, specially to try to preserve himself.)

The laws of nature are eternal and unchanging, but their *application* may be suspended because certain "validating conditions", as Warrender calls them. are not fulfilled. For instance, it is a law of nature that covenants should be kept. But this law ceases to apply if one party has a reasonable suspicion that the other party will not keep his side of the bargain, and such a suspicion would usually be reasonable in the state of nature. Nor is a man obliged to obey a law of nature if he believes that to do so will be detrimental to himself, and this situation will repeatedly arise in a state of fearful insecurity. In such situations the laws of nature cease to oblige *in foro externo*. Mr. Warrender's contention is that the Sovereign creates, not moral obligations, but merely validating *conditions* of security and predictability under which pre-existing but suspended obligations become fully operative.

Warrender's position is complicated by the fact that Hobbes declared that the "law of nature, and the civil law, contain each other, and are of equal extent." A student of Hobbes who keeps this passage prominently in mind and who is (like myself) influenced by Oakeshott's picture of a morality-creating Leviathan, might point out that: (1) all laws of nature are suspended amid the terrors of the state of nature; (2) a validating condition for any law is that it and its author be known; (3) the civil laws (which *are* known and *are* created by a known Sovereign) "contain" the laws of nature. He might conclude that since the laws of nature seem to depend entirely for their effectiveness on the Sovereign's legislative activity, the distinction between creating morality and bringing a pre-existing morality to life becomes, in the case of Hobbes, merely terminological, or at most a metaphysical distinction unaccompanied by any practical difference.

To these points Mr. Warrender has the following replies: (1) *Some* laws of nature—for instance, those forbidding drunkenness and pointless cruelty— *are* operative in the state of nature, since these would not promote self-preservation however extreme the insecurity; (2) laws of nature, and the existence of their author, God, *can* be known by men who are neither insane nor atheists *without* the Sovereign's assistance; (3) despite that unfortunate quotation, the fact is that the civil law and the natural law are *not* of equal

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extent, since there are sins which are breaches of natural law only. This category contains some important items: treason (". . . by the sin of treason that law is broken which preceded the civil law, to wit, the natural. . ."), any iniquities the Sovereign himself may commit (he cannot, of course, commit an injustice), and sinful private thoughts.

Warrender re-inforces his argument for the persistence of an unchanging moral system through both natural and civil conditions by considering the situation of a citizen who fears that his Sovereign is unable to protect him. Such a man has to act according to his private interpretation of natural law, just as he would do in a state of nature.

Warrender has some striking things to say about the covenant. He points out that in the case of sovereignty by *acquisition* there *is* a contract between the Sovereign and the subject, and he argues that Hobbes would have done far better to introduce a similar contract between subjects and an instituted Sovereign; for the authoritarian conclusion that Hobbes draws from the absence of such a contract—namely, that the Sovereign can do his subjects no injury (though he may do them damage) because he represents them without being obliged to them—seems to imply the converse subversive conclusion that, however much *subjects* may damage their Sovereign they can never injure him. The absence of contractual obligations *between* subject and instituted Sovereign really means (as Locke argued later) that they are in a state of nature *vis-à-vis* each other. Warrender contends that it is natural law which makes the keeping of covenants obligatory, and not the "absurdity" of breaking promises which makes contractual undertakings obligatory. Thus the political covenant occupies a subordinate position, its chief function being to designate *who* the Sovereign is.

In Part III Mr. Warrender investigates the grounds of our obligation to obey the eternal laws of nature. As he says, his preceding argument in Parts I and II about the manner in which other obligations (e.g. to keep this contract or obey that civil law) are derived from this obligation to obey the laws of nature will not be adversely affected if his conclusions about the derivation of this latter, overriding obligation are rejected. I am glad about this, because I find these conclusions difficult to accept. Warrender maintains that the laws of nature prescribe means for a collective rather than an individual goal (for the preservation of *society* rather than for my preservation and your preservation) and he believes that my earthly interest may run counter to the interest of society. Consequently, if I do not believe in the existence of God, an after-life, divine punishment and the possibility of salvation, not only shall I have no obligation to obey the law of nature (since a validating condition is that the author of the law should be known) but it may even be in my interest to defy a law of nature. Here, the likening of Hobbes to Locke has been carried a stage farther: atheists deny the source of all obligation and so are outside the derived system of political obligation. Mr. Warrender refers rather startlingly to Hobbes's "Calvinistic theology" and almost turns this tough Erastian, who believed that religion should be absorbed by the State, into a Genevan theocrat who believes that the State must be consecrated by religion.

Against all this I should argue that: (1) Hobbes regarded the collective goal of civil peace as a *necessary* pre-requisite for the personal goal of self-preservation (without civil peace *no one* has enough strength to ensure his survival) (2) he held that *any* infringement of natural law *tends* to threaten civil peace; and so tends to endanger the infringer's own life; (3) for Hobbes an action dictated only by my desire for life will be just as compulsory for me as an action dictated by God; hence the laws of nature, *qua* "convenient articles of peace", will be just as compelling for the atheist as are the laws of nature, *qua*

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God's commands, for the believer; (4) what Christianity commands is, for practical purposes, obedience to secular authority which is precisely what the "articles of peace" dictate to the atheist. It is here that a consideration of Hobbes's *intentions* might have helped. I do not think that there is any reason to suppose that Hobbes intended to make the civil lot of atheists either easier or harder than that of believers. On the other hand, I think we have every reason to suppose that he did intend to make his argument for civil obedience seem utterly compelling to every sort of reader—atheist, deist or Christian—and, in particular, that he wished to rule out any theological escape-clauses about obedience even to infidel or atheistic Sovereigns. So he had to pile theological sanctions on top of the natural sanction of the fear of violent death, to keep the believer politically in line with the atheist, neither of whom is granted any excuse for contravening natural law.

But criticism here is disarmed by Mr. Warrender's generous provision of an alternative, and to my mind far more plausible, view according to which it is God's will as such, and not the accompanying threat of divine penalties, which renders the laws of nature obligatory, God's will being introduced to fill in the topmost rung in Hobbes's "obedience-law-authority" ladder.

The general effect of Mr. Warrender's re-examination is to transform the familiar picture of Hobbes the legal positivist whose secular Sovereign creates morality into a picture of a theological positivist who holds that God creates morality under which the Sovereign fulfils his duty of interpreting it and rendering it operative. Warrender admits that Hobbes's laws of nature are highly formal, so that the Sovereign has a lot of filling in to do, but he does not appear to regard this as a creative moral activity. He points out that the value of life and the evil of death are not the product of the Sovereign's command, and that without these evaluations there would be no justification for the Sovereign's authority. But these are not really *ethical* evaluations but simply the *de facto* "known natural inclinations of mankind", the factual psychological premises upon which Hobbes claimed to have grounded his whole political system.

It is here that I wish Mr. Warrender had considered one of Hobbes's out-lying doctrines to which he does not refer, namely his nominalism. For Hobbes, words like "right" and "wrong" are meaningless until they have been ostensively defined, and they have to be so defined by some person or body. Warrender relies a good deal on the fact that the citizen himself has to determine questions of right and wrong which fall outside the scope of the civil law according to his private conscience. But this only means that, within a limited area, the citizen remains his own sovereign, stipulating private definitions for himself. For there to be *public* standards of right and wrong there must be a single authoritative issuer of moral definitions. No doubt God does this to a limited extent—I agree that Hobbes could never have said, *Je n'ai pas besoin de cette hypothèse*. But within a society it is the Sovereign alone who can provide ethical terms with a public meaning. (Where he has not in this way created a public morality, only a medley of personal and autarkic moralities can exist.) The Sovereign is, after all, a "Mortall God". Mr. Warrender sometimes appears to be suggesting that he is only the Supreme Bureaucrat.

My inability to go the whole way with Mr. Warrender is a reflection of the fact that he has written an extraordinarily challenging and impressive book—a book, moreover, which maintains throughout the highest standards of scholarship and of calm, deliberate argument.

<div align="right">J. W. N. WATKINS.</div>

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Political Theory, The Foundations of Twentieth Century Political Thought. By ARNOLD BRECHT. (Princeton University Press. 1959. Pp. 603. Price 96s.)

Professor Arnold Brecht, after holding governmental posts in the Germany of the Weimar Republic, in 1933 came to the United States. He is now Professor Emeritus of the Graduate Faculty of Political and Social Science in the New School of Social Research, New York, where he taught for twenty-five years. In 1954 a book appeared, edited by Dr. Forkosch, entitled *The Political Philosophy of Arnold Brecht.* Professor Brecht, therefore, can be safely said to enter upon the present work, of which we have here the first volume, as a writer of internationally known and established reputation. We have learned from Sir Lewis Namier that, in history, a masterpiece can be defined as a book which so thoroughly covers its field that, at least for some generations, the work will not have to be done again. The present volume is, in this sense, a landmark since, even as a survey of the literature (too little read in Britain), no scholar in the future, of any calibre, will be able to overlook it. No excuses will be tolerable for acting, as has been too frequent in the past, as if this literature of political science and sociology did not exist or could safely be ignored. The survey, it may be added, explicitly claims to include, not only the theories of those who affirm that there can be or is a political science, but also—although some eminent names are ignored in the index— of those who deny it. As a genus these sceptics are divided, from the throne of judgment, by Dr. Brecht, *inter alia*, into the two categories of damnation of "those who ignore the problem" and of those who "seek their asylum" in history.

This book, however, does more than contain some hundreds of pages on the history of the rise of what Professor Brecht calls "scientific value relativism"—apparently so called because the handier phrase, "scientific neutralism", overlooks the fact that some scientists are not neutral, but passionate, about the importance of relativism. . . Perhaps the most important section of the book is that in which Dr. Brecht sets out his own considered methodology in political and social science. It can indeed be suggested that he protracts his argument too much and that, having killed the bird of objection once, he goes on killing it in succeeding sections. Since, however, there are British political students who assert that no serious attention has been given to this issue, perhaps Dr. Brecht has adequate defence.

The present reviewer will at least agree with Mr. Plamenatz that, in recent years since the fall of the great Utilitarian School and the death of Sidgwick, the political and social sciences in Britain have been "tainted with philosophy" in matters hypothetically irrelevant to ends and values. (This is the opposite of the erroneous argument, often heard in America but condemned by Professor Hocking, that philosophy itself should be regarded as an empirical science and values treated accordingly.) This reviewer will, therefore, agree with Professor Brecht's major and reiterated thesis that, in just so far as we are concerned with a *scientia transmissibilis*, what is required are empirical tests, not intuitions or assumptions, *in this field of means* towards eminent or common values, which remain speculative or unprovable. This is the exhaustive argument of Dr. Brecht's book, pursued through department after department of the relevant literature. Although Mannheim receives short shrift, there is a useful and much needed critique of Max Weber. However, Weber and Brecht concur in the former's *dictum:* "An empirical science cannot tell anyone what he *ought* to do, but rather what he *can* do, and under certain circumstances what he wishes to do" (i.e. as means to chosen ends). Brecht concludes: "The question of the appropriateness of the means

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for achieving a given end is undoubtedly accessible to scientific analysis." For the new approach the beginning of wisdom is a sharp abstract or schematic separation between the political science of means and the political philosophy of ends. The young men in political science need to read, not the confused and second-rate thought of Locke, but such classics as Graham Wallas.

It is possible that Professor Brecht assumes rather too readily that what is a fact and what a verification, and what is the "objective" view, aseptic of valuations, of the observer is more obvious than, I would submit, is indeed the case. Dr. Michael Polanyi has stressed that it is an error to suppose that research whether in the physical or the social sciences (the line of division should not be drawn between them, but methodologically between philosophy and science) is without subjective valuations. Although Dr. Brecht discusses both Kant and indeed Husserl, it cannot be said that the dubious spirit of Kant is much in evidence, brooding over the scene. This can, of course, to some of us be of the nature of a relief. Kant has done much harm to method in the social sciences. Where Professor Brecht almost certainly carries his argument too far (although this enthusiasm may be little more than a choice of words) is not only in insisting that political theory must include a systematic political science, capable of test, but in also adding that whatever is not capable of empirical verification ought not to be called "transmissible knowledge". Hence, not only the poets, artists and mystics, but (in his sense) the moralists and men of letters have no "knowledge" of this order. However, this may be a matter of words. He admits that they may have *scientia*.

Certainly knowledge and opinion are different. But here we seem to be thrust into the assertion—surely paradoxical—that *sophia* is not knowledge. This may not lack contemporary philosophical supporters, but is a difference more profound than some mere verbalism. The issue of logical certainty apart, the question seems to be posed whether anything that is only "probable" can correctly be described as "knowledge"—and indeed, whether, if the probable is not knowledge, men have any knowledge, so defined, at all. In brief, not all knowledge as *philosophia perennis* is (or need be) *scientia transmissibilis* in Dr. Brecht's limited and most convenient usage of the term. Dr. Brecht, however, gives a salutary basis for both political science and also for sound political philosophy in his comment (p. 90) that "above all, in every unique situation of history"—and there can be no science of history *as such*, since history is concerned with the unique—"there is always man, with his characteristic peculiarities that have remained fundamentally the same through all recorded history". Whether indeed philosophy should have nothing to do with politics, power or responsibility—which Mr. Gellner alleges is the contention of some contemporary philosophies—is a question beyond our province here. Certainly it is not dreamt of in Professor Brecht's philosophy.

GEORGE E. GORDON CATLIN.

Problems of Religious Knowledge. By PETER MUNZ. (S.C.M. Press. 1959. Pp. 253. Price 25s.)

"It appears" says Dr. Munz "that there is no basic agreement as to what religious knowledge is about, and therefore as to what kind of consideration would count as an effective argument either for or against any of the points of view expressed" (preface, p. 10). This "lawlessness" in religious discussion contrasts unfavourably, according to Dr. Munz, with the "rule of law" (p. 42)

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which holds good in discussion of scientific matters; and any claims based simply on an appeal to revealed truth must in the last resort be unsatisfactory, since the validity of a particular "revelation" is for ever beyond the reach of argument.

Dr. Munz does not try to justify religious knowledge by pretending it to be other than it is; thus it is not, or should not be, a means (whether desirable or otherwise) of controlling nature or promoting morality. Religious knowledge, according to him, is knowledge "of or about eternity" (p. 33). There is no room for the concept of eternity in the "positive" (scientific) picture of the world, but only in the "symbol" picture. A symbol in Dr. Munz' sense is not a substitute for the real thing; the word is used to stand for the relationship between a particular object or happening, e.g. a green tree bathed in sunshine, and a "feeling-state". "The green tree in sunshine *means* a feeling-state in the sense in which we might explain 'You have no idea how much this means to me'" (p. 54). The contents of the symbol picture are ordinary happenings, but they are viewed in a special way, referred to by Dr. Munz as "*sub specie essentiae*". Theologies can thus be regarded as attempts to show how the symbol picture should be interpreted. On a dualist view, for instance, the victim of a sacrifice is "the divine emissary from the world of supernature to the world of nature" (p. 204), between the physical world, one might say, and some timeless para-physical world. Dr. Munz himself favours what he calls a theology of "transfiguration". According to this view the sacrifice is "an act of love . . . out of proportion with any deserts . . . It arrests the ordinary flow of time because it stands out as an instant" (p. 215). Prayer on the dualist view is talking to the Being on the other side; in a theology of transfiguration prayer and dedication are acts of self-sacrifice.

This is an excellent book, and I hope it will be widely read, particularly by theologians. To have explicitly raised the difficulty about the apparent "lawlessness" of much religious discourse is an achievement in itself; and Dr. Munz' distinction between the positive picture of the world and the symbol picture (or, as one might say, between empirical language and parable language) seems to me undoubtedly right. A major difficulty, however, still remains. It is not entirely clear how in the last resort one is to decide between one symbol picture and another. At times Dr. Munz speaks in terms of "therapeutic efficiency", but at other times he seems to imply that we should let the symbol picture simply tell its own story and then reflect on what this story "means" to us or on our own "feeling-states" after hearing it. Is he saying that a decision between Buddhism and Christianity can be based only on the "feeling-states" aroused in us by stories of the Buddha and the Gospel stories respectively? Perhaps this conclusion is not as unacceptable as it sounds; it may be that "feeling-state" is too much of an *omnibus* term (the logic of the verb "feel" is, after all, extremely complex) and that Dr. Munz is not saying that it is a matter of "feeling" in the ordinary sense, but would agree that an issue of a moral kind is involved. At one point (p. 229) he speaks of "*interpreting* the sacrifice of Jesus *as* . . . ". The "interpreting-as" formula is certainly preferable to the assumption that one can ask whether Jesus was in fact an emissary from a para-physical world; but it still leaves an element of arbitrariness in an issue where one wants to be able to say meaningfully that there is a right answer.

There is a small printer's error on p. 51, line 10; on p. 222 "mysterias" should be "mysteriae", and on p. 231 "more on one foot" should be "move on one foot".

T. R. MILES.

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Die Philosophie im 20. Jahrhundert. By F. HEINEMANN. Eine enzyklopädische Darstellung ihrer Geschichte, Disziplinen und Aufgaben. (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag. 1959. Pp. 612. Price 34.50 DM.).

Professor Dr. F. Heinemann, Oxford, the well-known author of *Neue Wege der Philosophie*, 1929, and of *Existentialism and the Modern Predicament*, 1955, has published an Encyclopedia under the title *Philosophy in the Twentieth Century*.

It is intended to be read by cultured and philosophically-minded laymen, not by specialized students of philosophy or by mature and well-versed technical philosophers. It is remarkable for its breadth of comprehension by way of topics and for its novelty of approach by way of treatment.

In the Introduction, the Editor considers the work in the light of the tradition of existing Encyclopedias: by Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Francis Bacon, Pierre Bayle, Diderot and d'Alembert as well as of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and of Brockhaus' *Konversations-Lexikon*. His own conception is one of a "verstehende Enzyklopädie", i.e. an encyclopedia that aims primarily at an "understanding" of the historic periods and of the systematic problems of philosophic disciplines. As he states his view:

" . . . An Encyclopedia should be directed and pervaded by the primacy of understanding. No one today can master the totality of knowledge of the age; nor is this worth striving for at all. The example of the specialists, who know everything and understand nothing, is horrifying. An Encyclopedia of our days should primarily serve as an orientation; it should offer the layman the possibility of finding his way in the chaotic world into which he was born. . . . "[1]

In accordance with this tenet the essays of the contributors are conceived and elaborated. The Bibliography attached is, on the whole, very satisfactory, at any rate for the purpose of informing the non-specialist.

I. HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

(1) *Chinese Philosophy.*—Duyvendak, Leyden, surveys in an elucidating manner the Classical Chinese Philosophy, mainly of Kung-Futse, Menzius, Hsüntse, Mo-Ti, the Chinese Logical Paradoxes, Taoism and the Law School.

(2) *Indian Philosophy.*—Frauwallner, Vienna, who recently published a *History of Indian Philosophy* and texts of Buddhism, characterizes briefly three main periods of Indian Philosophy: the early era down to Buddha and Jina; the era of classical systems from the Sankya doctrine to the full development of Epistemology and Logic; and the later era from the Vedanta onwards.

(3) *Greek and Hellenistic Philosophy and* (4) *The Patristic Age.*—Wilpert, Cologne, undertakes a survey of the development of Greek and Hellenistic Philosophy as well as that of the Patristic Age. The depicting of Greek Philosophy especially of Aristotle's teaching, on which there are one or two publications by the author, and that of the whole Patristic Age seem well accomplished and very impressive.

(5) *Scholasticism.*—A. Epping, OFM, continues with a survey of "Philosophic Thought in the Middle Ages" with much penetrating understanding. Human warmth and intellectual acumen combine to offer a living presentation.

(6) *From Nicolaus of Cusa to Nietzsche.*—Knittermeyer, Bremen, who, in the early 1950's, published an interesting account of the History of Existen-

[1] P. 15.

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tialism from the Renaissance onwards, covers the vast and important period from Nicolaus of Cusa to Nietzsche. In Great Britain, though, it might well be objected that—under the heading of "English Enlightenment"— Locke, Berkeley and Hume are dealt with rather cursorily and not in accordance with their high rank and eminent contributions; an objection not likely to be made against other sections of the survey. A regrettable error occurs concerning the relationship between Hume and Kant: it was thought that it was the *Treatise on Human Nature* that had aroused Kant from his dogmatic slumber.

(7) *Twentieth Century.*—The Editor himself discusses "The Destiny and the Task of Philosophy in the Twentieth Century", in Germany, in Great Britain and in the United States. Heinemann, Oxford, evisages everywhere a similar process: The destiny of Philosophy in its having "lost its foundation" and its task in seeking to "find a new basis", from which to pose philosophical problems afresh.

II. SYSTEMATIC PROBLEMS IN THE VARIOUS PHILOSOPHICAL DISCIPLINES

(8) *Epistemology.*—The Editor, in one of his best contributions, distinguishes between "one-valued theories of knowledge" (Greek and Hellenistic Philosophy and the Theology of the Middle Ages), "two-valued theories of knowledge" (from Descartes to the Neo-Positivism of the early Twentieth Century), namely the empirical "vérités de faits" and the intellectual "vérités de raison", and "several-valued theories of knowledge" in contemporary Epistemology.

(9) *Logic.*—Feys, Löwen, distinguishes: (a) the traditional formal Logic; (b) formalized Logic; (c) the application of formalized Logic (Logistic); (d) Meta-Theories; and (e) the basic problem of logical technique and of philosophic thought.

(10) *Philosophy of Mathematics.*—Fraenkel, Jerusalem, in one of the best contributions in the Encyclopedia, offers a very instructive survey both of the crises concerning the foundations of mathematics and of the main new theories advanced since Cantor's "Theory of Groups".

(11) *Metaphysics.*—The Editor once more resumes to discuss "the most disputed and the most interesting of the philosophical disciplines". He dwells on what is termed the "antinomy" of Metaphysics: the principles, on the one hand, of its impossibility and, on the other hand, of metaphysical faith. In accordance with his view on Epistemology, he suggests the conception of a "several-valued" Metaphysics.

(12) *Natural Philosophy.*—Morgenau, New Haven, analyses the contemporaneous problem of the relationship between Natural Philosophy and Natural Science, its basic questions, the reality of verified facts, the philosophical import of the Quantum-Theory, the principles of Causality and of Indeterminacy and the problem of the position (or situation) as a "primary or secondary quality".

(13) *Philosophy of Living Beings.*—The eminent biologist Portmann, Basle, discusses the new twofold approach to life: (a) the meeting of human beings and of some species of animals and the observation of both animals and plants; and (b) our own experiencing (Erleben). After this fundamental prelude, he deals, (it would seem) with all the important problems of biology: from the changes in the cell-doctrine, the problem of the hierarchy of functions, that of the main characteristics of living beings via the trait of the

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"inwardness" of animals—implying the possibility of "consciousness" and similar problems of primary relevance up to the two greatest questions of the origin of life and of Evolution.—The exposition, from the beginning to the end, is one of unqualified and unrivalled mastery.

(14) *The Philosophy of Values.*—Von Rintelen, Mainz, concerns himself in a brief clarifying survey with the theme of the Philosophy of Values, their assessment in Antiquity, Middle Ages and Modern Times and the more recent theories of value since Lotze.

(15) *Ethics.*—The Editor takes the twofold crisis both of ethical theories and the much more fundamental one of Moral Consciousness as his starting-point. He discusses the definition of Ethics and its various important tasks (Choice, Goods of this world, Highest Good, Hierarchy of Values, Mode of Life to be chosen and kind of Human Being to be realized, the questions What ought I to will? and What ought I to do?) as well as the cosmic, religious and anthropological path to the foundation of Ethics and the problems with which the constructive philosopher of our age and of the near future is faced.

(16) *Aesthetics.*—The Editor, likewise, tackles the new situation and problems in Aesthetics. He characterizes art as: activity, play, ability, aesthetic experience, aesthetic faith, language, forming, liberation and its laws of creativeness. In accordance with his Epistemology and Metaphysics, he speaks of a "several-valued" Aesthetic.

(17) *Philosophy of History.*—The late F. Kaufmann, Buffalo, who before 1933 taught in the University of Freiburg i.B., West Germany, deals with this important discipline; and with the maturity of deep, long-grown and well-assimilated knowledge of thought. Kaufmann starts with the modes of genuine and of secularized Messianism since St. Augustine; in this context he also discusses Marxism and later, the dissatisfaction with "Kultur", then considers the main topic of a "Theory of Historical Knowledge" (Critique of Historical Reason) of Dilthey and others (Croce, Collingwood, Max Weber, Spranger) and of a "Phenomenology of History", of which he himself briefly suggests a few main, important traits. The seemingly last contribution of a very sensitive, highly-cultured, well-trained phenomenological thinker.

(18) *Political Philosophy.*—Von Kempski, Hamburg, discusses in a very modern and invigorating manner the main problems of Political Philosophy, which—in contrast to the century-old Anglo-Saxon tradition—practically failed to take root and develop in German-speaking countries. In his view (as in that of the reviewer) a genuine and well-thought-out "Political Philosophy" is an impelling task of our age. With impressive clarity of thought, two main groups of problems are distinguished and treated: (*a*) the relationship between Political Philosophy and Philosophy of Law, with a considerable variety of items involved; and (*b*) a Philosophy of Revolution, implying different problems.—In the end, the theme of material equality and of liberty in a modern Democracy is discussed; and what is likely to be even more theoretically fundamental: the nature of Political Philosophies as Ideologies.

(19) *Philosophy of Culture.*—M. Landmann, Berlin, gives a fine, short account of the concept of "Kultur" in several essential respects, taking also the sociological conditionedness of man into consideration.—The problem of the relationship between "Kultur" and "Bildung"—of great import, e.g. to the Age of Goethe and its individualism and also to the later tradition of "Wissens-Bildung"—has not been touched upon.

(20) *Philosophical Anthropology.*—W. Brüning, Cordoba, traces the History of Philosophical Anthropology in Antiquity, Middle Ages and in modern

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times and distinguishes in the contemporaneous discussion of it three basic attitudes: the hypothesis (*a*) of objectivity given principles, (*b*) of individualistic pluralism and (*c*) of a universal constitutive philosophic project. With an interesting and clarifying ingenuity he groups with each of these three types a considerable number of eminent or relevant contemporary thinkers, who have discussed this novel fundamental topic; in all no less than thirty, mainly from Germany, France and the United States. A fine, concluding contribution to the Encyclopedia.

It had originally been intended to offer an attempt at "constructive criticism", concerning the omission of some rather important philosophical disciplines. Instead the main philosophical topics that are omitted can only be enumerated.

(1) The Philosophy of Religion, including the new problem of the several modes of Faith.

(2) The systematic problems of the Philosophy of Psychology; Psychology and Sociology belonging (besides Logic, Epistemology, the History of the Mind and Philosophic Anthropology) to the most relevant philosophical disciplines.

(3) The problems of the philosophy of the social sciences, including those of a social history from the age of primitive tribes to the era of civilized communities and nations.

(4) The systematic problems of the Discipline of Education, including its History since Antiquity and the Middle Ages, especially also University Education in various lands.

(5) The philosophical problems of a History of Culture (J. Burckhardt) and more especially of a History of the Mind (Geistes–Geischichte, Wilh. Dilthey).

In conclusion, it should again be emphasized that the Encyclopedia is intended for educated and philosophically-minded non-specialists only.

With regard to this restricted aim, the Editor and Contributors should be sincerely congratulated upon their efforts and success. The work can be genuinely recommended, despite some small shortcomings in one or the other of the sections.

WERNER G. BROCK.

The Theory of Committees and Elections. By DUNCAN BLACK. (Cambridge University Press. 1958. Pp. xiii + 242. Price 30s.)

In this book, Black attempts to give a formal treatment of the way we come to make political decisions. The aim of the theory of committees is to state a general theory of economic and political choice. It is argued that the general nature of choice is the same in voting as in the buying and selling of commodities in the economic market. In both cases the grounds on which our choice is made may be expressed in terms of preference scales.

Starting then from essentially economic notions, Black believes that he can construct a rigorous political theory. The theory is applicable both to the working of Parliament and the Cabinet, since these are also committees, and so for that matter are the party machines and local government councils. International agreements are also reached by committees.

In essence the theory reduces itself to the fact that each member of a committee will rank the motions (or candidates) before it in an order of pre-

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ference. A particular motion will be selected if and only if the members' preference schedules taken as a group rank it higher than they do the other motions. Further, the actual type of committee procedure in use may affect the outcome, since different procedures will select different motions.

Against Black's views it has been argued that the way one votes is different from the way one chooses in the economic market. The following reasons have been adduced: (1) that unlike the chooser in the market the voter can never predict with certainty which of the alternatives will be chosen, and this uncertainty may influence his behaviour; (2) that as the responsibility for making any political decision is divided, there is a less objective consideration of alternatives; and (3) there is a possibility of coercion in voting which does not occur in the market.

These objections, however, are really only ones of degree. Some types of commercial advertising, for example, have an almost coercive force. Black might also argue that he is not primarily concerned with describing how political decisions are in fact made. He is putting forward a normative view as to how members of a committee ought to act if they wish to arrive at a rational decision.

The theory can also be criticized on the ground that different people may prefer one motion (or candidate) to another from quite different motives. To this Black replies that since motive is one of the aspects of choice which is abstracted from economic science, it can also be abstracted from the theory of committees. This may be true if we confine ourselves to the logic of preference scales, but if we wish to understand why people make the political decisions they do make, an understanding of their motives is of vital importance.

Black's attempt to relate politics and economics through the theory of committees does not seem to be entirely successful. If anything, economic science needs redirecting towards political studies. This book does, however, bring out the possibility of studying political problems by some of the formal techniques recently introduced in the other social sciences. These should form a valuable addition to the purely dialectical methods so long in use in political philosophy.

W. MAYS.

The Literature of Possibility: A Study in Humanistic Existentialism. By HAZEL E. BARNES. (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press. 1959. Pp. x + 402. Price $5.75.)

After her very competent translation of Sartre's *L'Etre et le Néant*, Miss Barnes might have been expected to produce a work on the philosophy of Sartre. A translator would seem to be in a good position to do this, and such a work is clearly needed. Instead, she has chosen to add yet another to the growing list of books on "Existentialism", which in general provide their authors with an opportunity for making wide statements without the necessity for detailed work. But in this case there is no doubt about the author's industry. Besides the three authors taken for examination, Sartre, Camus and de Beauvoir, numerous others from both sides of the Atlantic are discussed and plots of their work given, from the Greek dramatists, via Dostoevsky, to the "Beat Generation" and the "Angry Young Men". Perhaps it would be unfair to criticize an American for saying of the latter group: "Most of these writers are distinctly disinterested in politics. (Doris Lessing may prove to

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be an exception.)" (p. 384). It is clear that she means "uninterested", but the judgment is still surprising. Even Colin Wilson is given two pages of consideration.

The first major question seems to be the grouping of the three figures of Sartre, Camus and de Beauvoir together in one work. In a sense it is legitimate to couple Sartre and de Beauvoir, though, as Miss Barnes admits, the latter is more than just an interpreter of Sartre. But in the case of Camus, the dissimilarities clearly outweigh the similarities, as the depth of their quarrel suggests, and to see their difference as merely one of politics is to misunderstand it. Camus might be described as an "essentialist" in his belief in a human nature and the existence of "eternal values". Miss Barnes's final justification of her choice of subjects seems curiously weak, "But with apologies to my subjects, I prefer to call them humanistic existentialists. Rightly or wrongly, the public is accustomed to think of them as existentialists" (p. 4). But public usage in naming philosophic movements is never a good guide, as the recent history of English philosophy shows, and whatever virtue the name "existentialism" once had, it has since lost, particularly as Sartre himself has recently described it as only an "ideology", in contrast with Marxism, which is for him a genuine philosophy.

As I have said, it is clear that Miss Barnes has read both widely and deeply, but the book does not give the impression of any clear purpose. Nominally it is divided into four sections, the literary theory of Sartre and Camus, the Existentialist conception of man and the human condition, existential psycho-analysis, and a final section entitled "Possibilities" which attempts to appraise the achievements and potentialities of the movement, but the division is not strictly adhered to. It might have been thought that any attempt at examining the literary theory of Sartre and Camus would have at once revealed their differences to Miss Barnes, for Sartre is a professional philosopher who has used the novel and theatre to express certain insights he has obtained as the *result* of his philosophical work, whereas Camus is a writer who has found it necessary to make philosophic pronouncements without in any way constructing a philosophic system. For an understanding of Camus's stature, we must go to his novels and plays. Miss Barnes never considers these as literature, but merely as an expression of certain views; in fact she seems incapable of a literary viewpoint at all, e.g. in her comment on de Beauvoir's *L'Invitée*. "I think we should not be afraid to say that this is a shocking book. There are, of course, allowances which must be made. In all fairness we must grant that the denouement is a metaphysical murder rather than a real one. There is no sign in the rest of her work that de Beauvoir actually believes it justifiable to kill anyone blocking the way to one's self-realization" (p. 135).

But failures of literary judgment might be forgiveable if the true philosophical import of the works were revealed. Here again Miss Barnes often fails. "The effect of Dos Passos is most obvious in Sartre's *The Reprieve*. Here a widely varied set of characters and events are connected only by simultaneity in time. . . . On the other hand, the fact that Sartre has not employed this device either in the rest of this novel sequence or in any of his other books suggests that he found the method foreign to him and could not be content with a borrowed technique except for an isolated instance where it seemed peculiarly appropriate" (p. 375). Whether he was influenced by Dos Passos or not, the reason why Sartre used such a method in *Le Sursis* is that he believes that an event such as a war or a crisis *consists* only in the reactions of a large number of people. It would not be unfair to say that he was attempting to show that a crisis is a logical construction out of the varied

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behaviour of individual men, though he does not describe the attempt in these words.

I suspect that Miss Barnes nevertheless would prefer Sartre's novels to be less good literary works. "Much as Sartre may object to the 'theatre of characters', the fact remains that the protagonists in his fiction are people and not personifications. They may experience anguish and nausea; they may illustrate patterns of bad faith or point the way to a life in freedom. But we do not find a volatile character representing the For-Itself who has ambivalent feelings towards a phlegmatic figure resembling the In-Itself, the two of them maintaining a relation based on deception in the land of Bad Faith, but separating for ever when For-Itself learns the truth about things through the aid of a hypnotist named Freedom. We are worlds removed from John Bunyan and not even on the same continent with Dante" (p. 275).

Ultimately I think that the unsatisfactoriness of this book arises from Miss Barnes's lack of interest in what these authors have to say for its own sake, and her desire to extract a "message" of some kind, as is shown by the three questions she poses at the beginning of her final section. "In what sense is their philosophy a humanism? Where do they stand with regard to the old idea that man is a creature of reason? Is there any place in their work for the ancient concepts of sin and salvation?" (p. 367). To ask such vague questions is to doom the whole study to futility. As a result, more can be learnt about Sartre's literary works in Miss Murdoch's brief study than in the large number of pages devoted to him in this over-long work.

Finally, it must be said that this book displays all the worst features of American critical writing. No novelist can be mentioned without the plot of one of his novels being recounted, however irrelevant it may be. There are repetitions (e.g. p. 43 and pp. 381–3). The style is cumbersome and opaque, frequently descending to meaninglessness, e.g. the comment on Miss Murdoch's novels; "In fact she seems anachronistically to have adopted existentialist psychology for the purpose of creating a new-style literature of characters" (p. 383), and "As a humanism, existentialism makes everybody responsible for everything—as Dostoyevsky said" (p 369). What can be made of the following? "If one were to attempt a concrete picture of man as the existentialists—and other of our contemporaries—see him, I think the result would be a combination of some of the forms of Dali—a strange figure, partly organic, partly mechanized, with a hole in the middle, with bony excrescences jutting out into the distance, all of this set in a background of melting or disintegrating time. If the portrait seems absurd, we must remember that the absurdity of man is an existentialist concept" (p. 47). This is illustrated on the dust-jacket.

A. R. MANSER.

Social Principles and the Democratic State. By S. I. BENN and R. S. PETERS. (George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1959. Pp. 403. Price 32s.)

For some years now there has been a lack of a good textbook on social and political theory. The older standard works by Barker, Hobhouse and Laski have long been outdated and the more recent smaller works by Carritt, Mabbott and Field, good though they are in a number of ways, range over too limited a number of topics and often with insufficient depth of treatment. Messrs. Benn and Peters have deliberately set out to fill the gap and judged by that intention they have succeeded admirably. The book ought to, and surely will, become prescribed reading in every university where the subject is

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taught. Moreover, what they have to say is, in places, a valuable contribution to the present stage of discussion on a number of important problems. There will, of course, be complaints about what has been left out or lightly touched on in preference to matters nearer the critic's heart. But the failure to treat nationalism and communism at any length will, as indeed some early reviews have suggested, be widely felt as a serious omission and regarded as a sign of the insular standpoint from which the book has been written. The authors might think that it is long enough already. Probably so, but there are many pages dealing with relatively minor matters that could quite well have been given up to these vital contemporary phenomena. Political theory is from its very nature something that ought not to remain within the limits of traditional treatment; for although democracy, unlike the polis in Aristotle's day, may not be in decline, it has had to face tremendous challenges in this century and its survival over the next few decades is really an open question. Of this we get little hint in these pages.

There are fifteen chapters and an appendix on international relations. The authors cover such subjects as the nature of society. law, rights, justice and equality, property, punishment, freedom, sovereignty, political obligation and democracy. It might be thought impossible for there to be any unity of theme in a work of this kind yet there is a central principle which the authors state in the second chapter (on moral theory) and which recurs frequently in the rest of the book. It is not a new principle, and the authors do not claim it is; but the consistency with which it is applied here in a variety of contexts gives the book a quite distinctive quality when compared with others in the same field. The principle is: the impartial considerations of persons. Absolutely basic to morality, they argue, is the impartial consideration of all persons whose interests are involved, and this implies respect for persons as such. So reasons must be given for treating people in significantly different ways. For the authors this is the heart of morality in relation to questions of rights, justice and equality. It plays an important part too in their discussions of liberty and democracy. When they deal with justice and equality they relate the idea of equality of consideration ("none shall be held to have a claim to better treat-ment than another, in advance of good grounds being produced") to this notion of impartiality and argue that equality of consideration is implicit in the idea of justice, for being just is nothing other than treating persons in the same way unless there are significant differences between them. When they come to liberty they again use this pattern of argument. Like the presumption against treating men differently until grounds for distinction have been shown so there is a presumption in favour of liberty: the onus of justifying restraint lies on those who seek to interfere with what a man wants to do. And, they claim, the reason for this presumption is the same in both cases, namely, that moral justification implies treating men as ends and never only as means. Unless reasons can be adduced for unequal treatment or imposing restraints then such action is tantamount to treating human beings as mere instruments.

They also appeal to the principle in their analysis of the notion of "the common good", and in the chapters on political obligation and democracy.

In the context of concepts like equality and justice the principle of impartial consideration of persons has an obvious force and relevance. When, however, they come to discuss the nature of politics or of democracy it seems to me that Benn and Peters have allowed their legitimate partiality for the principle to colour unduly the way they deal with these two topics. Politics, they say, is "the interplay of pressures, rather than the assertion of sovereign will. . . . Political action is always the result of a conflict of wills, never an expression of a single independent will." As against some of the influential theories of

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sovereignty this is certainly a proper reaction. But they have gone too far in the other direction. Taking account of recent work done on pressure-group activity in Britain, itself partly stimulated by long preoccupation with the subject among American academicians, the authors have evidently been influenced by the analogy between their own principle of impartial judgment of interests and the view of government as an impartial mediator between various interest-groups. Mediating between pressure-groups and rival claims is, however, far from the whole of politics. Such a view is more understandable in relation to the political habits of the United States than most other countries, yet even in America there have been great periods of drive from the holders of presidential power—e.g. Jackson, Lincoln and F. D. R.—which cannot be explained in these terms. A fortiori is this the case for much of British history: the war-time Coalition and the first majority Labour government are obvious recent examples. And, outside the democracies, it would be merely fanciful to try to fit men like Lenin, Hitler, Kemal Atatürk, Gandhi, Stalin and Mao into this framework.

In like fashion Benn and Peters have allowed the account they give of democracy to be influenced by their central moral principle. They say that democratic institutions (universal suffrage, freedom of speech and association, periodic elections, etc.) are intimately connected with the principles of impartiality and respect for persons which, as they have tried to show earlier, underlie the main political concepts of justice, liberty and equality. Governments, they argue, should aim at satisfying the needs of their subjects, all of whose claims should be impartially considered. This means that every man, being a source of claims, must be treated as an end in himself and not as a mere instrument. And, they continue, only a democratic government is likely to behave in accordance with these principles; because in a democracy every person is possessed of the right to state a claim "which no government could afford to ignore". In support they quote at this point a well-known passage from Mill's *Representative Government*: "The rights and interests of every and any person are only secure from being disregarded when the person interested is himself able, and habitually disposed, to stand up for them." Yet Mill, of all the nineteenth-century democrats, was the most uneasy about the fate of minorities under universal suffrage. Experience of modern democracy does not suggest that his fears were altogether unfounded; for in the democracies, as we know them to work, there is no incentive for any party to pay attention to the needs of thinly scattered minorities whose voting power in any single (or small group of) constituencies is negligible. At times Benn and Peters write as if democracy *does* see to it that no interest is ignored, *is* sensitive to all claims and *does* give good reasons for disappointing the claims it cannot satisfy. But at other times they seem to wish to say no more than that democracy is more likely than other types of government to live up to these standards. If they had been content to say simply the latter it would have been quite unexceptional. Of course there are greater safeguards against the neglect of individual and group claims in a democracy than post-Stalin Russia or Salazar's Portugal. One of the remarkable things about Krushchev's "secret" speech on Stalin was its complete failure to account for the evils it enumerated. Marxism has always undervalued the role of political institutions in preventing the abuse of power. On the other hand we must be careful not to overstate the virtues of democratic states. Democratic politicians often give bad, and sometimes even fraudulent, reasons for their actions. The manner in which budget concessions have been made on the eve of elections, only to be withdrawn soon after, and the reasons advanced in each case, is only one example that comes to mind of the politicians' not infrequent unconcern about the validity

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of his publicly stated reasons so long as his supporters stand solidly behind him. Benn and Peters admit that democracies sometimes fail to ensure "wide sensitivity to all claims, and the adjustment of conflicts in a spirit of impartiality" (p. 353). I should say this happens more frequently than their account seems to allow. The educational needs of middle-class children are not seldom ignored by local councils long dominated by the Labour party. Some classes of pensioners have been shown to have suffered silently for decades because their needs have been ignored by successive governments. And so one could go on. To justify democracy by reference to some ideal standards, as if it really lived up to them from day to day, is to assume an unnecessary burden. In places Benn and Peters write as though they had to pitch the claims of democracy at the highest possible level. In the concluding section of their chapter on democracy they write: "The principle of universal suffrage is a way of giving practical recognition to the moral value of every man as a source of claims; it is also a way of providing that governors will attend to them." Surely it is by the comparison of democracy with the various alternatives that its superiority is established. Some of its institutions are good in themselves and also, along with others, serve to minimize the dangers of power. Using the principles asserted by Benn and Peters as a yardstick, democracy comes out a winner. But we should not assume that even the best of democracies can ever succeed in living up to the standards by which their comparative worth is decided.

J. C. REES.

Freedom and Immortality. By IAN T. RAMSEY. (London: S. C. M. Press. 1960. Pp. 157. Price 16s.)

In this lively and provocative book, which constitutes the Forwood Lectures given in the University of Liverpool in 1957, Professor I. T. Ramsey's aim is to show that through a study of the concepts of freedom and immortality it is possible to justify empirically the language of metaphysics and philosophical theology. He tells us (p. 152) that behind the arguments in the book lie three convictions: (*a*) that the diversity found in ordinary language is such as argues for the possibility of metaphysics: (*b*) that "no logical structure will be rightly assigned to a phrase in metaphysical theology unless it grounds that phrase in a disclosure situation which includes observables and more than observables, what is seen and what is unseen": (*c*) that many problems, e.g. freedom versus omnipotence, arise because of what he calls "logical misallocations".

It is conviction (*b*) that gives us most succinctly the kernel of Ramsey's argument, as applied to freedom and immortality, and it is just here that I believe Ramsey himself has contravened his third conviction and made a logical misallocation. Discussing predictability and decision, he asks what we mean by free decision. There are those, he says, who claim that there are no such things as free decisions, that decision like everything else can be understood in terms of spatio-temporal events. This is the approach of science. But there is also the approach of morality, and, for this approach Ramsey, like Kant, has the greater sympathy. He believes, then, that we have free will in the moment of "free" decision, when there occurs a situation not restricted to the spatio-temporal events it contains. To use the author's own example, there is the case of the Duke of Newcastle who dreamed he was making a speech in the House of Lords, and awoke to find that he was. Let us suppose that there was continuity in his speech before and after waking, of only part of that speech could the Duke have said "I am speaking". We

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make, it is argued, a free decision when each of us can characteristically use of ourselves the word "I", and on these occasions the word covers more than all language about objects talks about. "The claim for free will is, then, that in the moment of decision there is disclosed the 'transcendent' character of man's personality."

Ramsey goes on to link freedom with morality by arguing that a free decision is a response to a challenge which is "duty" or "obligation", which like the decision is spatio-temporal, but at the same time more than spatio-temporal. And since to be "free" is to transcend the spatio-temporal, we are therefore immortal.

To my mind there is here a confusion of logic and metaphysics. Ramsey connects (rightly) prediction with description, and proceeds to argue that in decision there is something which "transcends" description and discloses the transcendent character of human personality. Now it is a fact about language that the most detailed description of an event can never be complete. The reason is that it is possible that any number of events could satisfy that description. Descriptions fail, and must fail, to take account of the uniqueness of events. In a way Ramsey sees this but draws quite the wrong conclusion from it. He thinks that because a description can never be complete we have a "situation which includes observables and more than observables, what is seen and what is unseen". What is a matter of language he makes a matter of metaphysics. Ramsey of course believes that free will occurs in a certain kind of decisive action, when a man "realizes himself as something more than language or all of these stories—be they of biochemistry, economics, psychology and so on—talk about". Each man certainly is aware at times of his own uniqueness. But that awareness gives him no grounds for holding that he is something more than a spatio-temporal creature, or that he is immortal.

W. D. GLASGOW.

IBN KHALDUN: *The Muqaddimah*. Translated from the Arabic (and with an introduction) by FRANZ ROSENTHAL. (Routledge & Kegan Paul. 1958. 3 vols, 481, plus 463, plus 603 pp. 6 guineas the set.)

To begin with, let it be said that this is a magnificent production of a classic hitherto not available in English. (The customarily used French edition is now almost a century old, and in English only collections of excerpts have been available.)

Ibn Khaldun was a fourteenth-century North African Arab philosopher and sociologist, who fused an interest in philosophy, sociology and Berber studies— a combination most attractive to a mature mind, and one which has appealed to others in later times (for instance, Westermarck). The concreteness of tribal politics compensates for the abstractness of general thought.

The editor quotes A. Schimmel's list of occidental thinkers, for whom Ibn Khaldun may be considered as a forerunner: Machiavelli Bodin, Vico, Gibbon, Montesquieu, de Mably, Ferguson, Herder, Condorcet, Comte, Gobineau, Tarde, Breysig, and W. James. It is no doubt a sign of the richness and suggestiveness of Ibn Khaldun's thought that one can easily add one's own names to the list, drawing on interesting parallels or contrasts in contemporary preoccupations. (My own candidates would be Keynes and Max Weber.)

There are many ways in which this many-sided thinker has claim to our interest. The Editor tells us how within Islam, it was the Turks—a politically

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gifted rather than theory-addicted nation—who kept alive the interest in Ibn Khaldun before he acquired his reputation in Europe. Or again, it would be tempting to seek modern analogies of Ibn Khaldun's combination of extreme tough-mindedness in his view of the mechanics of society and of the proper method of social inquiry, with his religious and anti-philosophical attitude to wider matters.

But the aspect of his thought which is the most suggestive at the present time is his preoccupation with the problem of social development. At the core of his pessimistic theory is a belief that there is a sociological antimony between civilization and social cohesion. The former is essentially urban: the latter is essentially tribal. Power and solidarity are the fruits of one set of conditions, the sophisticated developments of the human spirit of another set, and the two are incompatible. Hence, all is transient. The barbarians outside the gate—the city *needs* its tribal allies for defence—are the ultimate fate of the city; but the urban decline of social cohesion is also the ultimate fate of the successful conquering tribe.

Thus Ibn Khaldun generalized a theory rooted in the facts of North African society as he knew it and applicable to it for many centuries after his death. North Africa, like the lands of the northern shore of the Mediterranean, had is urban civilization based on literacy, trade, and a religion of the Book; but there was something about the relation of town to country, and the bases and relations of power, which favoured the survival of tribalism and did not allow the development which took place in Europe. Any attempt to extend the comparative basis of studies or the growth of Western society will find in the Maghnib a fine well-matched negative example, and in Ibn Khaldun the main source both of fact and of interpretation of it.

But his sociology throws light not merely on the comparative study of the growth of strong, stable and urban society—a phenomenon which the data available to him led him to deny—but also on a comparison at a higher level of abstraction, between the bases of social cohesion in pre-industrial and industrial societies. He recognized two such bases: the tribal links of kinship, and religion. The combination of the two he knew to be of explosive power. (The situation arising when kinship affiliations survived genuine tribal cohesion—as in the case he knew of urban Jews claiming affiliation to biblical tribes—he considered a kind of sociological fraud. . . .) This dichotomy is I think parallel to the bureaucracy/charisma division popularized by Max Weber, and we likewise get the explosion when effective organization and unifying ideology are found together. Kinship is the bureaucracy of the tribe, the manner of allocating roles and making action possible through stable expectations. (The third category sometimes invoked, "traditional" cohesion, is I think a spurious one. As an explanation it is vacuous, rather than merely incomplete like the others, and its appeal springs from a kind of optical illusion. Simpler societies all tend to look "traditional" to us, for a variety of reasons including the fact that illiterate people have to invoke granddad where literate ones can invoke a document.) For these wider issues again, Ibn Khaldun will figure in the essential bibliographies.

The editor and publishers are to be congratulated on having made his work available—and in such a splendid form.

ERNEST GELLNER.

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NEW BOOKS

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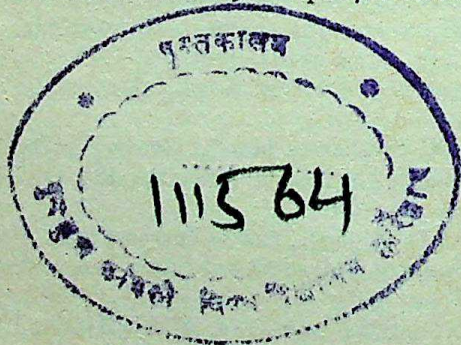
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The Royal Institute of Philosophy was founded in order to promote the study of philosophy within the Universities and other educational institutions and also among the educated public generally. It pursues its aim by

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Forms of application for membership may be had on application to the Assistant Secretary at 14 Gordon Square, W.C.1.

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Back numbers of *Philosophy* can be obtained by application to the Royal Institute of Philosophy or to Macmillan and Co. Ltd.

NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of *Philosophy* will appear in October 1961.

INTRODUCTORY COURSE

Owing to the interest shown in the Introductory Course in Problems in Modern Philosophy given in the Autumn Term of 1960, it is hoped that another course can be given in the Autumn of 1961, probably in Ethics. Details will be given in the October number.

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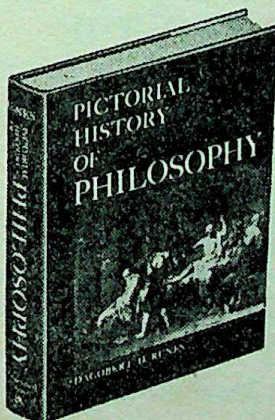
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